

National Racquetball

THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE U.S. RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION

Volume 3 Number 1

March, 1975

WILLIAM SCHULTZ
2418 Chamberlin Ave.
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Can You Think Of A Better Place To Play?



LEVE

By Chuck Leve

This is a special issue of *National Racquetball* magazine. It is not only your regular issue, it is also a souvenir program for the National Championships in Las Vegas. This, the souvenir tournament issue, carries important instructional material, exciting tournament results and the latest in racquetball activities. We know you will enjoy it.

One article I wish you would pay extra attention to is "Is This Racquetball?" beginning on page

In it are four proposed rule changes that many people believe would be in the best interests of racquetball. The editors of *National Racquetball* would like your comments on these proposals, and they are just that, one man's opinion. But if the opinion is shared by the majority these could become rules.

I urge you to clip out the answer form on page and send it to Letters-to-the-Editor, National Racquetball, 4101 Dempster St., Skokie, Illinois 60076. We want to know how you feel on these subjects, and we're sure all the members of the U.S.R.A. would like to know, too. Feel free to be as elaborate as you wish.

If you are reading this here in Las Vegas, may I take this opportunity to welcome you to the biggest and best racquetball tournament ever staged. The atmosphere here is electric with excitement as over 500 racquetball participants from all corners of the country, have converged on this desert city to do battle in 12 brackets of play.

Who will be the man to take

home the largest first place prize in racquetball's history? Who will be the woman to do the same in the Ladies Pro division? Can anybody tell? The predictions by this writer can be found in "The Odds Are . . ." beginning on page

All of us at the U.S.R.A. and N.R.C. are tremendously impressed and thankful for the superb promotional aid bestowed upon us by the Seamco Sporting Goods Company. As you all know by now, Seamco has donated \$25,000 in prize money this season for the Pro Tour, the culmination being right here in Las Vegas.

Such an unselfish and heroic gesture by Don Strong, Executive Vice President of Seamco and his firm has breathed refreshing life into this great sport of ours. It proves that Seamco never stops working in the best interests of racquetball. And their newest innovation, the new Seamco 747 racquetball will be met by your approval, we're sure.

This new ball, packed in pressurized two-ball cans, is now the official ball of the U.S.R.A. Its jet-black color and striking packaging make it the first choice of your eye, and the ball is even better. Try the Seamco 747, and remember, those royalties derived from the sales of both the 747 and 559 by Seamco go to the U.S.R.A. and N.R.C. for further promotion of racquetball.

For all their great efforts, we thank Seamco.

These National Championships have been hard work for all of those involved, organizers, promoters, manufacturers and players. It is the culmination of the most

successful effort in any sports second year of professional play. To thank all the people who have made it possible would be impractical for the names would fill every page of this book.

But I personally would like to commend two individuals who have done service to racquetball so far above and beyond what one would dub the call of duty, that that trite phrase does not do them justice.

I speak first of my colleague whose article adorns the page after next, the National Commissioner and Business Manager of our organizations, Joe Ardito.

Here is a man whose life has been all handball until two years ago, when he unselfishly came aboard our racquetball program. He has taken many a great burden off of my shoulders, removed pressures both real and imagined, and has fallen in love with racquetball.

He is a stern, yet fair judge. He has taken many a player under his wing, especially the youngsters and shown them genuine care and understanding. It is not an easy task for kids to buck the great pressures of big time racquetball, yet over half of the nation's top players are 26-years-old or younger. Joe has been like a father to many of them, myself included.

The other person whom I would like to cite needs no introduction. He is Bob Kendler.

The beautiful thing about Mr. Kendler is that he doesn't need racquetball, he just wants to help the sport. I feel racquetball needs

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Pro Racquetball Gloves

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What Can We Do For An Encore?

By Joe Ardito

Without question this has been the greatest season ever in the history of racquetball. And there is no doubt that it has been a tremendously successful year for the National Racquetball Club and the U.S. Racquetball Association. A short re-cap of the year will show the great momentum that has been generated as we congregate here in Las Vegas for the grand finale, the National Championships.

We kicked off the 1974 portion of the '74-75 tour with the Oceanside Pro-Am in September out in California. At that time we had the following hurdles to overcome, - 1) a rival association had signed a number of top players and prohibited them from playing in our pro tournaments, - 2) that same organization told its members that if they did compete in our tournaments for money they would be barred from their own association tournaments, - 3) We had no outside sponsor to donate the prize money, - 4) we had as our official racquetball one that was inconsistent and not as durable as we knew the players wanted.

Yet we were determined to go forward, and not let these temporary roadblocks stop us. The Oceanside event was a good one, although we had hoped that it would be bigger. But players like Serot, Keeley, Zeitman, Alder and Rubenstein ignored the threat of banishment from other groups and played and played well. Don't let anyone kid you, - it was a good tournament and we were happy with it.

October of 1974 arrived and the tour moved to Vancouver in British Columbia. The same top players, minus Rubenstein, made the trip, but little progress was made to lure

some of the game's other top players to our events. Yet the Vancouverites were hospitable as could be, and everyone who went had a great time. Keeley, who had won the Oceanside event, lost in the finals at the M.A.R.C. in Vancouver, to Serot, whom he beat a month earlier.

One real bright spot of the Vancouver event was the improvement of the Seamco 559 racquetball. There was little, if any breakage at this tournament and the balls were lively. The good ball was getting near.

Shortly after the Vancouver tournament legal action was initiated by a third party in an effort to test the legality of the barring of players from N.R.C. tournaments. Before such legal action could reach the courts, the ban was rescinded and all players except those under contract with another association were allowed to play wherever they wished.

This policy, of allowing anybody to play in N.R.C. tournaments, no matter who they were, who they were signed with, pro or amateur, man or woman or junior, is the principle on which the N.R.C. knew it would succeed.

"It is not a matter of who wins our prize money," said our president Bob Kendler, "but the fact that any player in the world may have a free and uninhibited chance to compete for that money."

With the ban lifted from all but the contract few November came around and it was a turning point for the season. Everybody except those few contract players showed up, - Serot, Keeley, Rubenstein, Zeitman, Alder, Wong, Strom, Stafford, Hogan, Bledsoe, and im-



ARDITO

proved Richard Wagner and many, many others. A superb turnout in amateur brackets helped boost the interest as well.

And for the first time in the history of racquetball, prize money was awarded to women, in the women's pro-am bracket of play. It wasn't much, \$500.00 total purse, but it was a start and those gals who competed and won, certainly appreciated it.

"Sure, I'd love a shot at \$1,300 first place like Serot won here," said Kathy Williams who took home the \$250.00 first prize, "but it'll come. In the meantime, I think the N.R.C. and Mr. Kendler are headed in the right direction."

Serot topped Keeley again in the finals in Aurora, Williams beat a spunky Sue Carow in the gals finals. And we can't pass without thanking Jim Stotz, Tim Rusch and everyone in Aurora for giving us an indication of the great things ahead.

And now it was on to Cleveland, or was it? For the first time on the N.R.C. tour, a host backed out of a tournament. Cleveland's Executive Club, with a signed contract in hand, claimed it could not host the event scheduled for December 14-16 due to vague fire code regulations. We didn't buy it, but rather than get into any legal action or

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What Can We Do For An Encore?

From page 6

cause anybody any hard feelings, we allowed Cleveland to wiggle out.

Instead we turned to Kathy Williams, now managing a new court club in Livonia, Michigan. Kathy was able to convince the ownership that the pro-am event, even on such short notice, would be good for a new club and so on to Livonia the tour went.

And although the notice was short, and the entry lower than we had hoped for, the play was excellent, and everybody felt the strength, solidarity and camaraderie that had been building within the N.R.C. The players who had been playing the N.R.C. tour knew that they were more than just racquetballers trying to make a buck. They realized that they stood for something, for the right way to promote the game, with openness and fairness for all.

These players, — Serot, Keeley, Strom, Wagner, Alder, Ycaza Drake and others played great racquetball in Livonia. It was in Livonia that we knew our greatest successes were just around the corner.

Livonia marked more than Keeley's win over Serot in the men's final, and William's great comeback win over Carow in the ladies. For the first time the Seamco 559 came in pressurized two-ball cans, making the lively, durable ball and our dream come true. It was here!

Word then filtered from Memphis, where another organization held a pro event the same weekend as Livonia, that Mike Zeitman, one of these players who had been playing N.R.C., was allowed to enter, play and win money in Memphis. The ramifications were tremendous, — if any of the players competing on the N.R.C. tour could jump and play both tours, those playing for the other association would be at a great disadvantage. They would have a shot at only half of the total prize money offered, while N.R.C. players would have a shot at it all.

And even though the N.R.C. would allow them to play if they entered, their contract prohibited them from doing so. This pres-

sured their organization into issuing a statement to its contract pro players that if the dates did not conflict, they could play where they wanted. Freedom had finally arrived.

And it turned out that January of 1975 had no date conflict when two major manufacturers pulled out of a scheduled pro event by the other tour. So in Sunnyvale, where sponsorship help from the D.B. Framp-ton Co. was another first for the N.R.C., virtually every top player was there.

And a great tournament it was, as Steve Strandemo defeated Charlie Brumfield for the title. Jan Campbell topped Silvia Hooks for the ladies title and over 300 entrants in other brackets made it quite a weekend of racquetball.

The great successes in Sunnyvale prompted the N.R.C. to change its next two dates, on which the rival pro tour had scheduled tournaments, their reason being to keep the tours segregated. So Lansing in February went off on the sixth to ninth and Milwaukee the same dates a month later.

But the time between Sunnyvale and Lansing was far more important than players practice and preparatory time between tournaments. It was during this time that Don Strong, Executive Vice President of Seamco Sporting Goods, sat down one Sunday morning in January with the N.R.C.'s brass at the home of president Kendler.

As the discussions mounted, Don offered his firm's help in promotion, — in the amount of \$25,000 in prize money for the remaining three tournaments, — Lansing, Milwaukee and Las Vegas! All with no strings attached.

And then came Lansing, with the greatest competition in the game's pro history. Fantastic action from all rounds, and impossible-to-believe play from the quarters on. Nobody could believe their eyes, for racquetball had just moved one step up as a competitive sport.

So in six short months, the N.R.C. and now its amateur counterpart U.S.R.A. have achieved every single one of its goals. All

players are allowed to compete in all tournaments. No players have been banned from anything. The Seamco 559 racquetball is now solid, high bounce and in pressurized cans. The U.S.R.A. is a strong, functioning organization, and has proven it with the great job being done in Las Vegas. Women have been given a start in the area of prize money. Everything possible has been done to keep tournament dates free of conflicts so all the players can play in all the events. And the biggest step forward for us and the game, is the emergence of a national sponsor, — the Seamco Sporting Goods firm.

People should know what this means to our sport. Seamco's promotion aids racquetball in the one area where help is most needed, national recognition. We welcome Seamco's support of the N.R.C. and of racquetball in general. And we hope you will see fit to help promote the sport, by using their N.R.C. and U.S.R.A. endorsed products, the 559 and 747 racquetballs. Seamco, the number one name in racquetball, and it's a well deserved title.

And so here we are, in Las Vegas, Nevada, entertainment capital of the world. This week of April 20-25 it becomes the racquetball capital of the world as well, as hundreds and close to a thousand eager and active racquetballers have converged on this tiny city.

The glamour and intrigue of Vegas is everywhere; the casinos, the show girls, the stars. I wish I could tell everyone how we're all basking in the sun, but unfortunately that's not the case. Our staff of over 50 workers for both the handball and racquetball weeks have been diligently doing their jobs, with scarcely a minute rest. Which, to some of them is going to be a good thing, to keep their money in their own pocket.

But we strongly feel that everybody is a winner here in Las Vegas. The great multitude of players, guests, fans and promoters is heartwarming for us. This week is a fitting zenith for a great year for the N.R.C. and U.S.R.A. But don't think we'll be sitting on our laurels. No way! No matter how much you accomplish in racquetball or in life, there is always something more you can do. Just watch us.

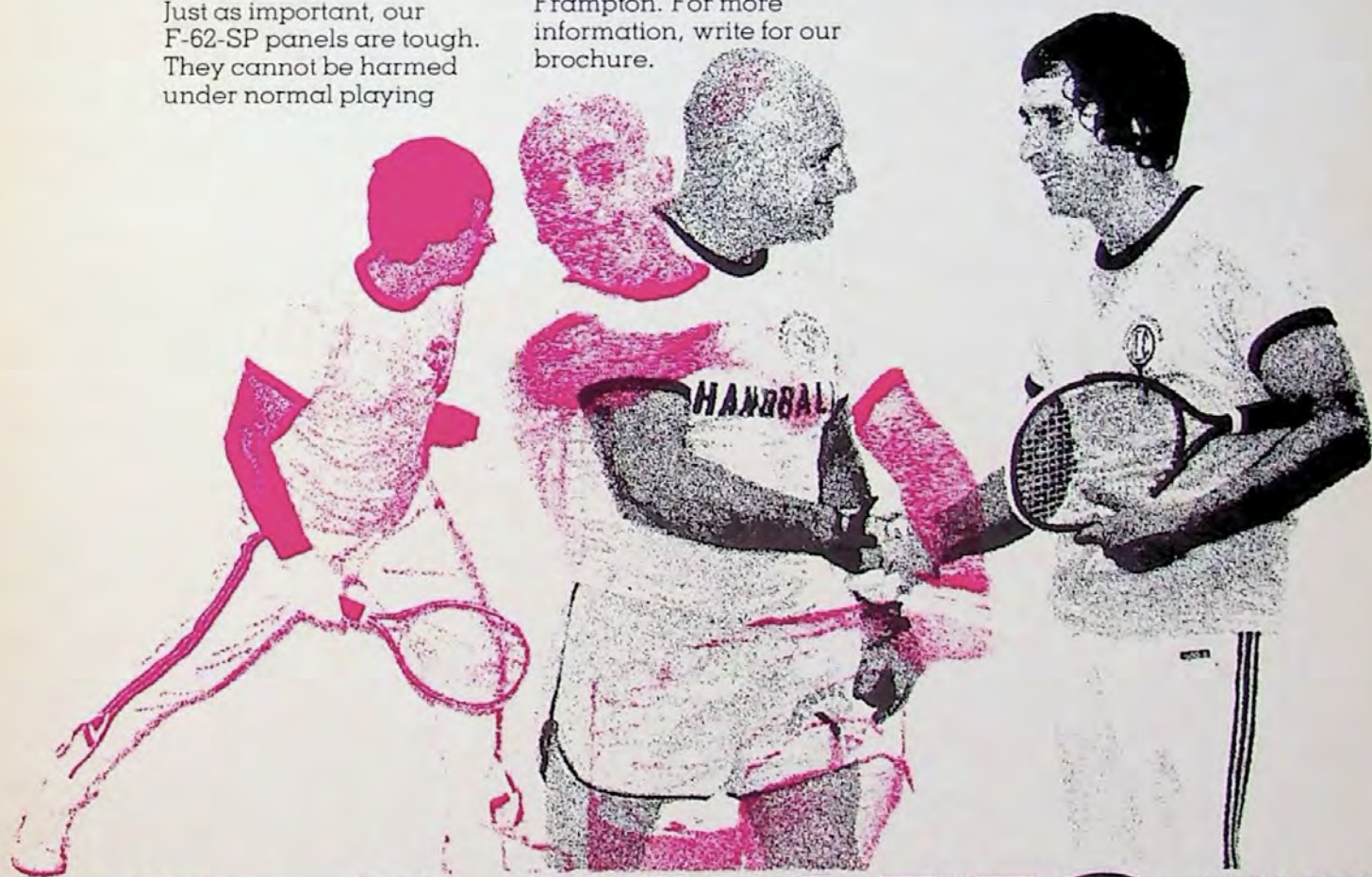
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Coming soon: An important new product from Frampton. After several years of planning and research, we are going to introduce a new product that will be of great interest to anyone planning to build a new court installation. Watch these pages for more details.



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Las Vegas Ready To Go For National Championships

The greatest event in the history of our sport, the U.S.R.A.'s National Championships in Las Vegas April 20-25, 1975 will soon be here. The Tropicana Hotel and University of Nevada at Las Vegas are readying their combined 13 courts to make this the most spectacular racquetball tournament ever staged.

The top pros are all preparing for Las Vegas. You'll be able to see Steve Serot, Charlie Brumfield, Steve Keeley, Steve Strandemo, Ron Rubenstein, Bill Schmidtke and all the other greats in the game compete for the largest prize money pot ever offered in the game, — the grand finale of this

year's Seamco pro racquetball tour. A women's pro bracket will feature all the top gals as well.

And there is an event for everyone at this tournament. No qualifying is necessary, anybody who wishes can enter the play. There will be the two pro tournaments, plus 10 amateur events including open singles and doubles, seniors singles and doubles, masters singles and doubles, golden masters singles and doubles and women's singles and doubles, — for a total of 12 in all.

Not only that, as part of his or her entry fee, every entrant will be treated to the dinner show at the Tropicana, — the all new Folies

Bergere '75. It will be free after the awards banquet during the biggest week in racquetball!

The Tropicana is holding 250 rooms for racquetballers and many of them are already gone, — so don't wait. Use the enclosed room reservation, entry and ticket forms to confirm your participation in this tournament. Be sure to send all forms to the Las Vegas Racquetball Classic at the above address. If there was ever a racquetball tournament you should be at, — this is THE one.

Everyone is planning to play in the 1975 National Championships, and we hope you are one of them. See you in Las Vegas!

OFFICIAL TROPICANA ROOM RESERVATION

There are 250 rooms available for the April 20-25 Racquetball Classic at the Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas. They will be reserved on a first come, first serve basis. We urge you to get your reservations in as soon as possible. All rates are at \$28 plus tax (total — \$29.68), double occupancy. In other words, two in a room would be approximately \$15 each day. Three in a room — \$6 additional, or approximately \$12 per day each.

At least \$50 deposit will be necessary to confirm these rooms. \$25 will be refundable if you cancel this reservation at least 90 days prior to the start of the tournament; \$25 non-refundable. This \$50 deposit will be applied toward your six day-five night stay.

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Please reserve, and confirm by return mail, () room(s) at the Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas, for five nights, six days, April 20-25, 1975. The rates are understood to be \$29.68 per day, doubles occupancy, with \$25 of my \$50 refundable if reservation is cancelled at least 90 days before the April 20, 1975, start of the tournament. Three in a room at \$6 additional per day.

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Make check or money order payable to: LAS VEGAS RACQUETBALL CLASSIC; Mail to: N.R.C., 4101 Dempster St., Skokie, IL 60076.

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RULES: U. S. R. A. — N. R. C. rules and regulations apply. If two events entered, players may have back to back matches.

TROPHIES: To first four places in each event. First two places in consolation.

ENTRY DEADLINE: In our possession by 6 p. m. April 10, 1975. Prescribed fee must accompany signed entry form. Entries received after the deadline or unsigned, or without the fee will not be accepted. Open doubles deadline, 6 p. m. April 21, 1975.

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The Brum Comes Back In Lansing

In a brutally physical tournament Charlie Brumfield (r.) regained the top spot and gave notice to all others that he was ready.

Charlie Brumfield is back in form, so take notice, racquetball world. The 26-year-old San Diegan finally entered the N.R.C. winner's circle, with a finals win over Steve Strandemo at the Michigan Open stop of the Seamco Pro Racquetball Tour.

It was not an easy effort for the former national champ as he played through an extremely difficult draw, defeating Bill Schmidtke in the quarter-finals, Steve Serot in the semi's and then Strandemo in the finals.

Strandemo had an even rougher time making the championship match, having to go three with Ron Rubenstein in his quarter and topping Steve Keeley, in three in the semi.

When the final did come off, it was a fantastic match, a re-play of the finals in Sunnyvale, where Strandemo dominated. Here though, Brumfield gained the upper hand, but not until deep into the match.

The first game went to Strandemo, playing a far cleaner and more respected style of play. It was

21-12 for Steve in a routine game for him. Shooting as well as he did in Sunnyvale, Strandemo broke out on top and took the early lead.

Brumfield seemed content to keep the ball in play, choosing his spots to shoot and hoping to tire Strandemo, a surprising strategy as all are aware of Strandemo's great conditioning.

However, each man had a very difficult semi-final round and Charlie stayed in the middle of the court, moving little both on points he won and points he lost. He lost 21 in the first game as Strandemo definitely looked the stronger player.

So what a surprise game two was when Brumfield, after the initial jockeying, took control of the game. It was like watching two different players than those who played game one. Brumfield's movement was better, Strandemo's much more sluggish and Charlie breezed to his 21-7 win, in one of his best single game efforts in a long while.

Who could predict game three? Was Strandemo fatigued enough to succumb with hardly a

whimper? Would Brumfield's hot shooting hand cool? Were Strandemo's legs cramping as they appeared late in the second game, — or was it just a ruse to lull Brumfield as was done to Keeley in the semi's?

The questions were answered when Brumfield came out strong in the third. Holding impressive five and seven point leads early in the game, Charlie's control and increasingly accurate kill shots led to an 18-11 advantage. Nobody thought Strandemo could come back.

Nobody, that is, except Strandemo. Really gutting out the effort, he tallied a couple of quick points in the 18th inning and when the score mounted to 14, then 15-18 the full house gallery began the murmur that always accompanies a great comeback effort.

But Steve's wad was blown when he managed to reach 17-18. Char-





Strandemo gives it the Hollywood hinder try (l.) in the finals against Brumfield. Not this time, though, it was scored a pass.

lie had held on. By the time Brumfield regained the serve, he still had the lead, although only one point, but he also had the juice. Brumfield quickly scored the needed three points for a 21-17 final.

The semi-finals were two of the most outstanding matches of this year's tour. Strandemo pulled the psychological ploy of the season in defeating Keeley 10-21, 21-14, 21-13, and Brumfield came from 14-18 in the third game to best Serot 10-21, 21-16, 21-18. Both matches were well played and exciting and all four players showed the emotional strain of long weekend. This strain almost boiled over in both matches, as the four combatants almost blew their cool on the court.

Keeley played a superb first game in his match-up with Strandemo. His confidence was great, having defeated Strandemo in two consecutive amateur tournaments, after a pro defeat last year. Keeley hit his shots, Strandemo was fighting himself and the game was a complete blow-out.

Game two was more representative of Strandemo's capabilities.

Brumfield begins a belated move to cover a Strandemo kill into the left corner and at the same time avoids a waffle-face.

He shook the doldrums that encompassed him the first game and played well. Keeley missed some relatively easy forehands early in the game and seemed reluctant to shoot after that, resulting in long rallies, but Strandemo control.

They played even during the first one-third of the game, Strandemo grabbed the lead about half-way through and held it for the 21-14 win to even games at one apiece.

Both players were fatigued, both players tight, both players striving for every advantage. Yet each was able to go all out in the third game and it included the all-time racquetball acting performance ever given by a tired player in a semi-final round.

With Keeley holding a slight lead mid-way through the game, a drawn out rally occurred, leaving both players sprawled out on the floor, with Keeley winning the

point. Strandemo attempted to pick himself off the floor but was unable to do so.

"I can't get up," said Strandemo. "I've got cramps."

"Play ball," said referee Mike Zeitman.

"Steve," said Strandemo turning to Keeley. "I can't get up. Help me up."

"Get up yourself," said Keeley, angered by Strandemo's blocking style of play.

And get up Strandemo did, hobbling in obvious pain as his leg muscles apparently cramped from exhaustion.

Keeley watched the decrepit Strandemo barely make it to the receiver's position and the curly-haired veterinarian couldn't hold his joy any longer, flashing a tired but hideously happy smile to the gallery. He had the upper hand against Strandemo, the man some accuse of cheating, some accuse of blocking, but none accuse of not having great ability.

Well, one of these abilities includes thinking. Keeley was so happy about Strandemo's cramps he forgot to play. Expecting Stran-





The Semi's Were

T - O - U - G - H

Serot (top left) begins one of his many dives for a Brumfield pass in the semi-finals. Charlie stands flat-footed in center court awaiting the plum return, if any. A few rallies later, Serot (left) gives Brumfield a piece of his mind as the action and verbalizing heat up. Brumfield retaliates (top right) with a menacing glare and before long both players are involved in face-to-face jawing. Anyone for Scope?

demo to hobble about the court unable to reach a shot, imagine the shock that he underwent when Strandemo began racing from side to side in retrieving efforts. Strandemo began diving for shots, getting kill attempts, hitting his shots. Was this the play of a man with cramped legs?

It was not. It was the execution of a perfect game plan. Keeley lost the momentum, Strandemo regained it, and it was all Strandemo from there, 21-13.

In the upper bracket things were even more tense. What once was a great relationship both on the court and off between Serot and Brumfield, now is a battle between mind and body. These two men, who a scant two years ago were national doubles partners, now show only hate in their eyes on the court.

Serot, no longer an immature stringbean lefty with potential, is a huge and devastating 19-year-old racquetball player. He has had enough of Brumfield's on the court antics which had to this point made Brumfield the winner in their 14 previous meetings.

Brumfield, the crafty master, still is the feared man in the sport. And he wanted this one, for himself, and to retain the psychological edge over Serot.

Serot's recent ploy to shield himself to Brumfield's quips on the court, has been to quip first, but his quips degenerated into insults, voiced in screams, not tones.

Serot's first game, 21-10 win put Brumfield on the spot. This was a must match for him, he felt, with the Las Vegas Nationals only two months away. Serot could feel his own momentum moving forward. At long last he had Brumfield, could he put him away?

As the second game developed, the great intensity between these two players began to show. Play became more and more crowded, each rally ended with an outburst by one or the other and the antagonism finally reached a zenith



Strandemo sets up in deep court. Is this the body of a man with cramps?

at 5-all.

Although nobody is quite sure what action or comment precipitated the subsequent actions, both players had words with each other in center court after the 5-5 rally. Serot, who lost the point finally turned and as he began to walk back to the receiver's position, lightly struck Brumfield with his racquet, probably trying to hit his posterior as if to say, **"move your butt during play."**

But Brumfield had turned around by this time and the racquet hit Charlie in the groin, whereupon Charlie pushed Steve and both

players reached the verge of fist-cuffs. Had it not been for the quick intervention at that point by N.R.C. National Commissioner Joe Ardito and National Director Chuck Leve it might have been an ugly scene.

No punches were thrown, however, and after a stern warning by Ardito, play resumed. Each player was given a technical foul, and a point deducted from the score of each.

From then on, the best match in the history of racquetball took place, bar none. For 15 minutes Brumfield and Serot raced, dodged, spun, dove, grunted, groaned, dove again, killed, passed, and dove again, and again, — at the end of which the score had only reached the original 5-all.

Never before has such intensity and desire been shown on a racquetball court. The play was clean, verbalizing eliminated and the two players did just what they know best, play the greatest brand of racquetball imaginable.

Brumfield finally won the second game, 21-16, setting the stage for game three. The 10 minutes between games served as a good cooling off period and both men came back more relaxed, but just as determined.



Pow-wow in the hospitality room includes (l. to r.) Keeley, Teri Davis, Ardito, Leve, Brumfield and Ruth Warnick (seated foreground).

It was Serot who had the early advantage, an advantage he pushed to 18-14. But Charlie wasn't through. Reaching back for whatever was left he managed to run the next seven points, in five innings, and make it 15 in a row over Serot, 21-18 in the third.

The women's pro bracket was, as usual a Kathy Williams-Sue Carow final, although this time each of them had to work in their semi-final match.

Carow faced Indianapolis' Camille McCarthy in the bottom bracket and Camille played two excellent games, dropping the first 21-12, but coming back to win game two by the same score. The third, however, was all Carow 21-7.

In the upper bracket, Williams and Cincinnati's Gerri Stoffregen battled to the famous 20-20 dead-lock in the first game, with Kathy gaining the serve and finally the magic 21st point. Game two was disappointing as Gerri ran out of gas and succumbed 21-3.

What can you say about a Williams-Carow final? They have met now in the finals of three of the last four N.R.C.-U.S.R.A. tournaments and every one has been close and every one has been won by Williams. It was the same this time.

Close throughout, Williams pulled ahead down the stretch and captured the first game 21-15. Playing well, driving the ball beautifully, and making few errors,

Kathy Williams eyes the little green sphere as it comes off the back wall. If looks could tell . . .

Carow controlled and won the second game 21-11. And the third was a barnburner.

With each gal jockeying for every point she made it turned into real excitement. But the feeling all along was Kathy played just well enough to win, and that she did 21-18.

McCarthy turned in an impressive performance winning third place over Stoffregen 21-10, 21-16.

The best quarter-final match was Stoffregen's three game win over Beverly Franks, Northbrook, Illinois. After dropping game one 21-10, Gerri rebounded to take the next two games 21-13, 21-18, a disappointing loss for Bev. Teri Davis, Plymouth, Michigan, tried hard against McCarthy in the quarters, but Teri still is not on her game following back surgery two months ago. McCarthy triumphed 21-17, 21-11.

The amateur open singles bracket produced some outstanding play, and many of those competing are not that far away from giving some of the pros a good run for their money.

Bill Gottlieb, Lansing went up against Tom Connin, East Lansing in an all-local finals. It was an interesting contrast in styles, as Gott-

lieb, a pure racquetballer and right handed, battled a nationally ranked paddleballer and south-paw.

Both games of the two-game final were well played and exciting, for when has there been a match involving Gottlieb that wasn't exciting? Gottlieb took the title 21-17, 21-16.

Connin had to go three games in his semi-final duel but did it well in defeating Fred Lewerenz 21-14, 19-21, 21-11. Gottlieb had a tough first game, but then controlled the play against Ken Pechumer 21-18, 21-12 in the other bracket. Pechumer captured third place 21-16, 21-10 over Lewerenz.

In the quarters it was Connin over Tom Carpenter 17 and eight, Lewerenz over Len Baldori nine



Sue Carow drives the ball down the right side wall as Williams moves in for a return in the women's finals. Once again it was Kathy who came out on top.

and 13, Pecumer over Bob Barr 21-11, 20-21, 21-14, and Gottlieb over Gil Schmitt eight and 10.

The men's pro quarter-finals were displays of great racquetball, and although four of the players went away losers, they were not far behind those that triumphed.

The only quarter to go three games was in the bottom bracket where Strandemo and Ron Rubenstein battled, for the first time in two years. Ruby tried mightily, but Steve captured game one 21-17. The second game went to Rubenstein 21-14, and it was all Strandemo in the third, 21-10.

Mike Zeitman, playing the kind of ball of which he is capable, gave Keeley a very difficult time in the other bottom bracket semi, though losing 21-19, 21-18. Mike had posted an impressive win over Rich Wagner in the round of 16, 21-7, 21-14 prior to his effort against Keeley.

Brumfield came up against Bill Schmidtke in his quarter and the first game was a beauty, going down to the wire, 21-19 for Charlie. Schmidtke couldn't keep up the pace in the second, however, and fell 21-9.

Tourney director Jim Pruitt poses with amateur winners (l. to r.) Ken Pechumer - third, Pruitt, Bill Gottlieb - first, Tom Connin - second.

Serot drew Ron Strom in his quarter and Strom, although out of the first game 21-10, came back to play very well in the second, before Steve took control for a 21-16 win.

NOTES OF THE TOURNAMENT ... Gerry Lapierre topped John Leech in an all Cleveland Masters Singles final, 21-11, 5-21, 21-8; Don Van Fossen, St. Louis captured third place over Art Payne, Columbus, Ohio 9-21, 21-5, 21-19. ... John Gothard, Chicago, won the Masters Consolation, and it couldn't go to a nicer guy ... Tom Brownlee captured the Men's Amateur Open Consolation 19-21, 21-6, 21-16 over Chuck Ginther ... Judy Hutha won the Women's Novice title 21-8, 21-18 over Virginia Tipton ... Martie Wonch won the consolation ... Men's Novice was won by John Smekar, who defeated Mark Weigand in the finals 21-10, 21-7 ... Gerry Johnson won the Men's Novice Consolation ... Great parties both Friday night and



Saturday night, at the tourney headquarters Capitol Park Motor Hotel were fun for all ... Rich Wagner is the world's worst beer chugger, never put your money on him, no matter how sincere he might sound ... Accolades must go to Jim Pruitt, who did most of the organizational and promotional work himself, with great assistance from Ruth Warnick; super job people ... also help from Jim Santino, Jim Amick, Bill Gottlieb and the staff of the Lansing Y.M.C.A. ... Full galleries from the quarters on made the matches that much more enjoyable for the participants ... Glass court at the Y is one of the nicest to play on around ... Green Seamco 559 ball used throughout the tournament, with no breakage to speak of and great consistency. Good comments from all quarters on the balls ... Lansing, Michigan in February is c-o-l-d! ... Many of the players visited Dooleys, the "in" watering spot for the college set ... Nice to see so many paddleball players pick up a racquet to compete, including such well known paddleballers as Connin, Baldori, Kopulos and, of course, Keeley.



Gerry Lapierre (l.) follows through with an overhead shot in the Masters singles finals. John Leech moves in to cover.



Big sign at the registration area (above) welcome players and fans to the Michigan Pro-Am Open. Exciting it was, and we all thank Seamco for their sponsorship of the Pro-Am tour.

Galleries were full all three days as witnessed by part of the group (l.) along the glass side wall at the Lansing Y. The fans definitely were not disappointed.

(Below, left) shows the full upstairs gallery as well during the finals. Note the two N.R.C. officials on either side of referee Mike Zeitman. After the semi's, just in case.



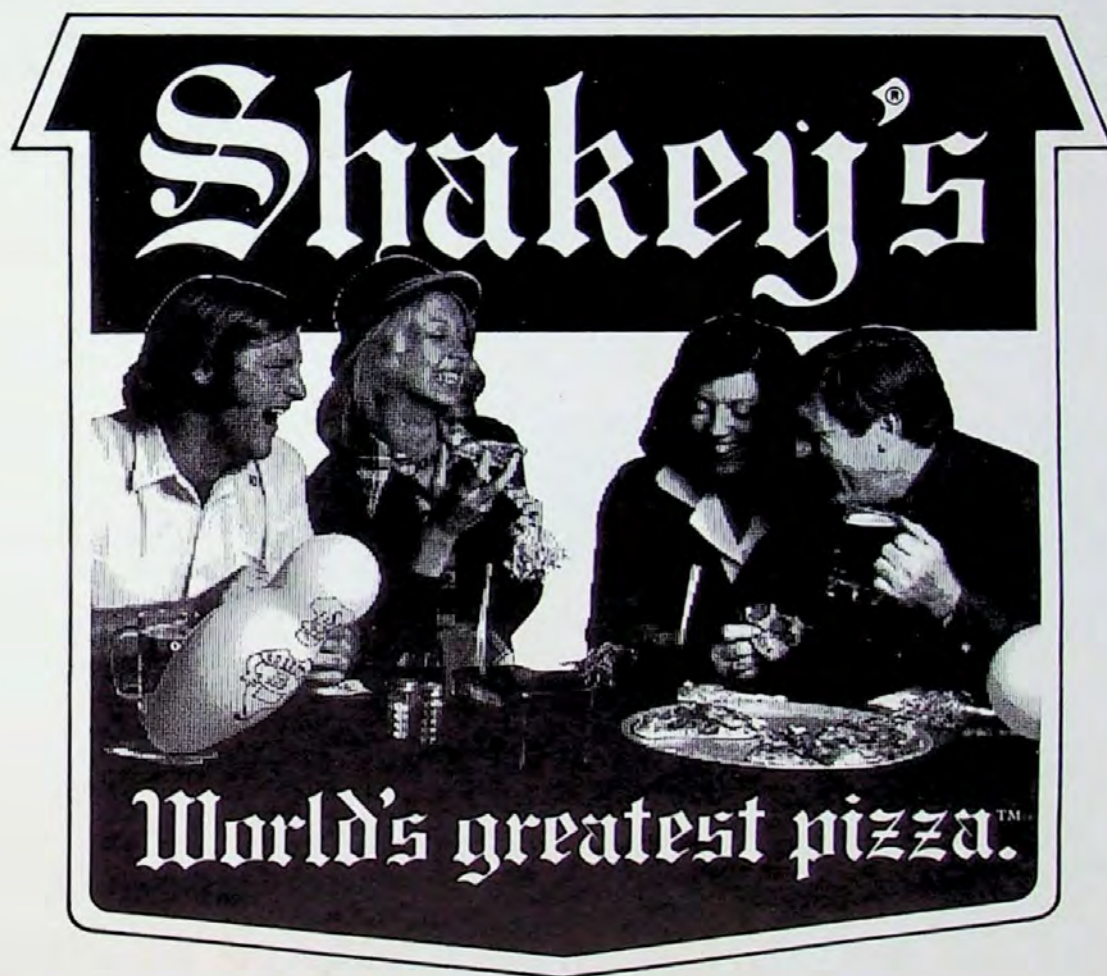
All photos

of the

Michigan Pro-Am

by Ronald Simons

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!OUR OWN COURTS IN 1975!

Frampton-Sunnyvale Pro-Am Brings All The Players Back

And it was a red-hot Steve Strandemo who did the most damage to N.R.C. and I.R.A. foes alike en route to his first win on the N.R.C. tour this season.

The Frampton-Sunnyvale Pro-Am Open was a turning point in the 1974-75 racquetball season. Simply, it marked the first time that all the top professional men players competed against each other. With no rival I.R.A. tournament going on January 16-19, the door was open for all the players. And all of them showed up.

In an electric atmosphere, with tension building with each round, the competition among both groups of pros was fierce. There were surprises every day, disappointments as well. But when the smoke had cleared it was Steve

Strandemo and Charlie Brumfield, both in their first N.R.C. start who made it to the finals.

Strandemo, showing a much-improved offensive game, blitzed through all competition including a devastating 21-13, 21-13 victory over Steve Serot in the semi-finals, to reach the championship match. Brumfield, exhibiting flashes of his former greatness, had a slightly rougher time, but topped Steve Keeley 17-21, 21-18, 21-11 in the other semi-final to go up against Strandemo in Sunday's main match.

We'd like to report that the finals

was an exciting, nail-biting down to the wire match, but it didn't happen that way. Instead, Strandemo dominated the play as he had throughout the tournament and captured the crown convincingly 21-14, 21-13.

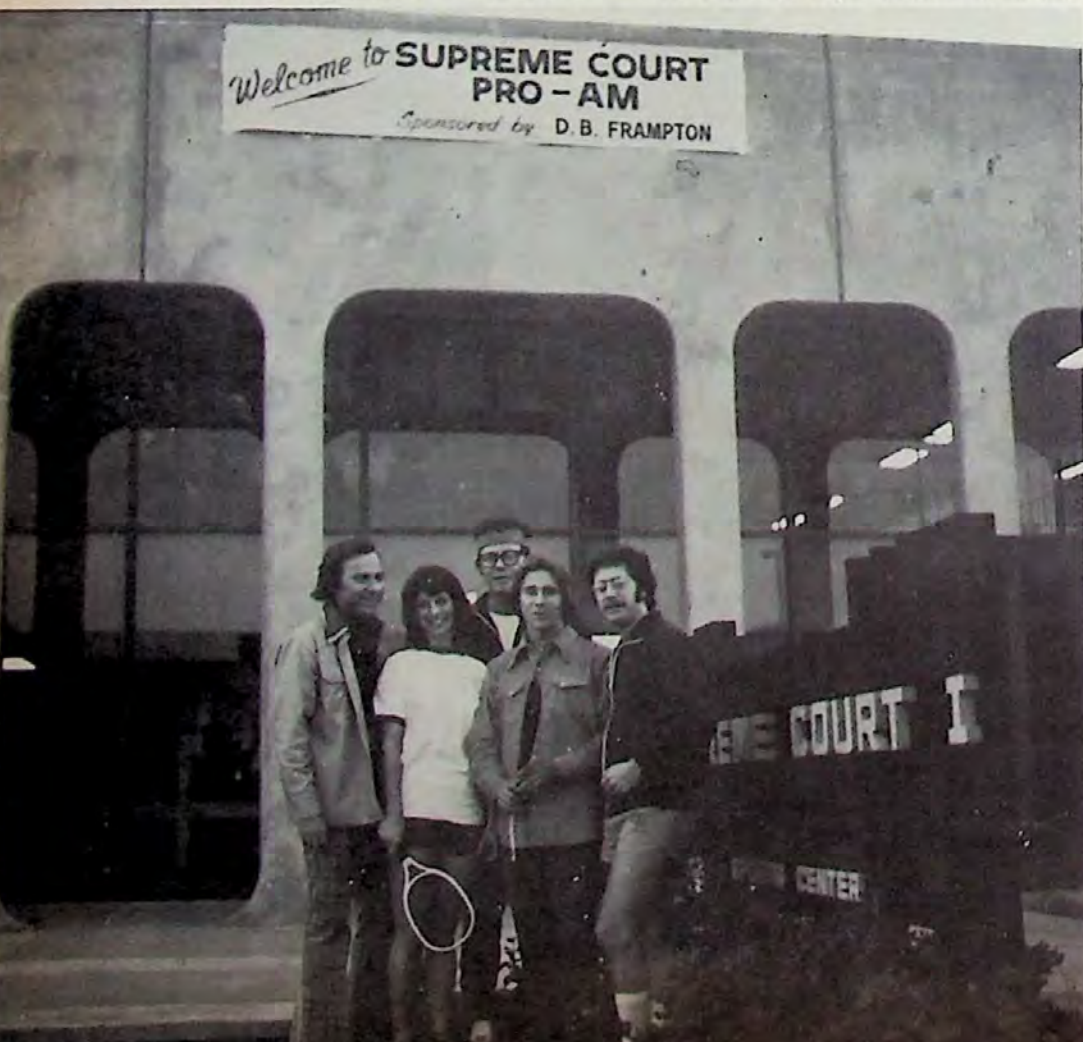
Observers from both sides of the racquetball political spectrum agreed that it was one of the finest performances of racquetball skills ever seen. To hold Serot and Brumfield to 26 and 27 points respectively in his last two rounds, Strandemo had to play the best racquetball that any player has shown during the season.

He did it with his usual retrieving greatness, fine control, and fierce determination. But he also added that one element that has always been lacking in his otherwise outstanding game, — a consistent kill shot. Steve's kills were not only consistent this weekend, they were unbelievable. He never missed.

Strandemo owned the left corner with his backhand, and the right corner acted like it had a magnet in it.

"I don't think I've ever shot that well," said Strandemo. "And I know never for such a sustained period of time."

His opponents didn't argue the point. Only former teammate Ron Strom gave Steve a real battle, succumbing in the quarter-finals 21-14, 21-20. That 21-20 game was



Rallying under the flag during the Frampton-Sunnyvale Pro-Am are (l. to r.) Don Jackson, Jean Oeschger, Mark Wayne, Rich Wagner and Chuck Leve.

It was all Strandemo in Sunnysvale as here Steve readies to retrieve a back court shot from Charlie Brumfield in the finals.

crete or block, and that the remarkable thing in their mind was the consistency of the bounce off the Frampton system. And despite C's and B's and doubles, not a dent was recorded in the fiber-resin paneled walls.

The Frampton-Sunnysvale Open also marked the first time that west coast women had a shot at the \$500 women's purse, and Jan Campbell, San Diego's number one, made the trip and collected the \$250 first place loot. The surprise second place finisher was localite Silvia Hooks, who played an impressive brand of racquetball. Give Silvia a little experience and she's going to go places in this sport.

Despite her far greater experience, Campbell had a real tussle with Hooks in the first game of the finals, before finally taking the game 21-15. Silvia couldn't mount a serious attack in the second game, and Jan, sensing her victory

was at hand, really poured it on, 21-5.

A double-elimination round robin type bracket was set up for the third place award with Bette Weed and Betty Johnson reaching the final match for that honor. Unfortunately, Johnson had been given incorrect information about the third place tourney and didn't realize she would have to play Sunday. When she arrived to watch the finals, she was told to get on the court which she did, and defeated Joan Kvandel. But rather than keep going and play Weed, Bette defaulted the third place to her.

One hundred and ninety-seven other participants shared the weekend's work load in the other seven brackets of play, and as usual the California standard of B and C competition is at least one

Below Strandemo shoots against Steve Serot in the semi-finals. This was possibly the best match played by Strandemo in the tourney.

the only one in which Steve was pressured at all.

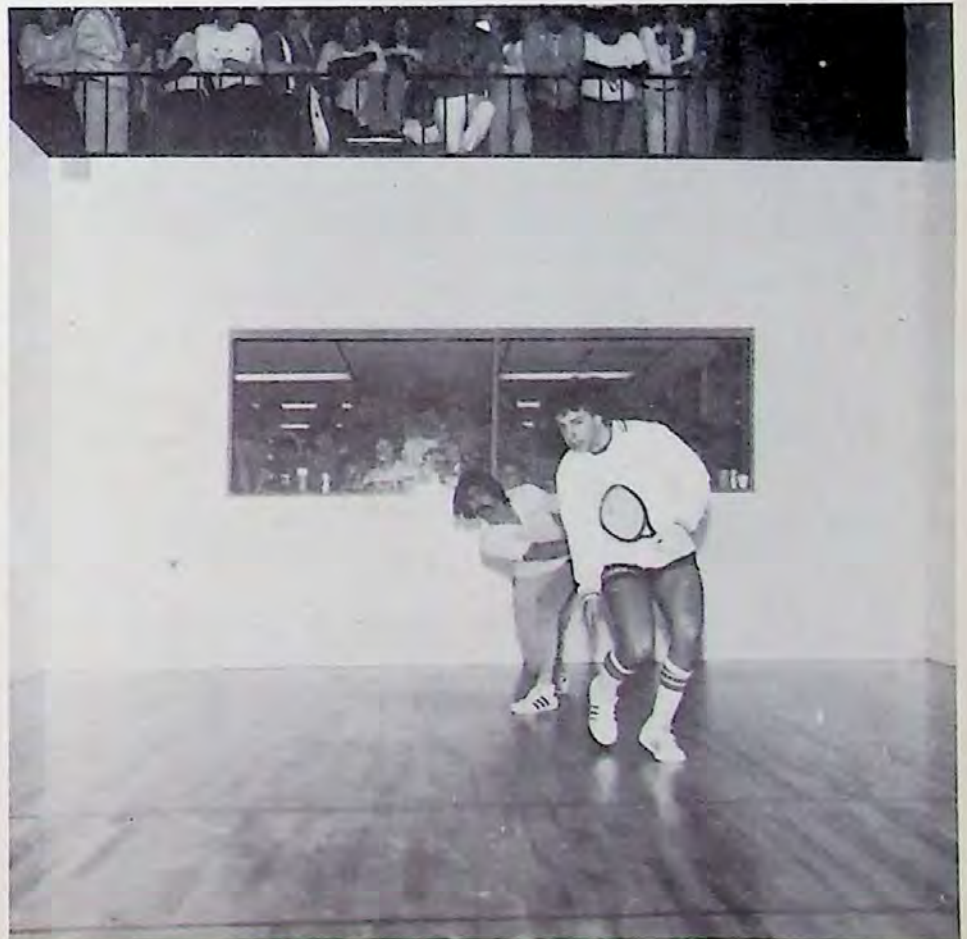
"We all knew that when Strandemo learned to kill the ball, he would be tough to beat," said Brumfield. **"Well, he's learned how to kill the ball."**

Brumfield's victory over Keeley was a marathon engagement, with conditioning seeming to be the crucial ingredient. Keeley had spent the Christmas layoff in home state Michigan and obviously missed the fine-tuning competition that San Diego usually gives him.

Brumfield ran him into the ground, and the curly-haired vet had no place to go in the third game.

Close games and matches were the regular diet for the early rounds of the tournament, partially sponsored by the D.B. Frampton Company, manufacturers of prefabricated panel court systems. John Dobbie, National Sales Director of the Frampton Company was on hand throughout the tournament, getting to know the players and comparing notes on how the Frampton courts stood up to the pros pounding.

The tournament was held at Supreme Court I, a 10 court facility which used the Frampton system exclusively. All the players commented that the courts played extremely well, no different than con-





Jan Campbell who topped the ladies pro-am follows through on a shot. It was Jan's first try at some N.R.C. cash.

and one-half notches higher than most other states.

Seniors singles had excellent action with all four top seeds making the semi-finals. Mark "Thundering Herd" Wayne eventually won the title, topping Deryck Clay in the finals 21-13, 10-21, 21-13. It was a typical Wayne-Clay match, long on ceiling shots and energy consumed.

Ron Starkman, the fourth seed, won third place by default over Keith Calkins.

The most exciting match of amateur finals was in Masters Singles where Mike Bugel and Lee Hoyt went a thrilling three games. Hoyt captured game one in relatively easy fashion, 21-10. But Bugel got hot in the second game and cou-

pled with Hoyt's inability to put anything together trounced Mike by an overwhelming 21-3. But nobody left the gallery for the third as the two men traded points to the very end when Bugel finally tallied that elusive 21st point for a 21-20 win.

John Keenan took third.

Steve Dunn, floor manager par excellence, had no trouble in the amateur men's open singles, once he got past the second round. There he had to hustle to take a 21-18, 21-20 victory from Gary Mazaroff. In the finals Dunn topped James McAllister 21-10, 21-14, in a match he controlled the entire way.

Jim Stafford defeated Joe Gurnoe for third place 12-21, 21-18, 21-14.

Men's B Singles was won by a rapidly-improving Mike Burgener who topped Tom Kraut in the finals 21-15, 21-13. Burgener has jumped from the C's to the B's and now by his victory there, to the Open division, — all within the space of seven months.

Judy Clemens ran rampant in the Women's B bracket, never being in trouble in any single game and allowing opponents double figures only once. She beat Linda Lucero in the finals 21-4, 21-6.

Men's B doubles was far more competitive with the third-seeded team of Kraut and Barry Gibbs defeating number one seeds John Keith and Tom Barkey in the finals 21-18, 21-16. Both semi-final matches went three games with Keith-Barkey eliminating Bill Austin and Keith Crosley 13-21, 21-19, 21-16 while Kraut-Gibbs topped Jim Werner and Al Green 21-9, 18-21, 21-9.

Werner-Green took third 13 and 13 over Crosley-Austin.

In the Men's pro quarter-finals interesting things were taking place. In the top bracket Serot faced an ailing Bill Schmidtke who

was suffering from torn muscles in his rib cage. But the wounded veteran gave a good account of himself before losing 21-15, 21-11.

Brumfield and Rich Wagner had a superb first game in their quarter-final match, with Brumfield having to come from behind to capture the game 21-20. Wagner, who defeated Jerry Hilecher in the round of 16 to earn his quarter-final berth, had a 20-17 lead but was unable to secure the big one. Game two was all Charlie, 21-18.

Keeley found the going just a little rough against Craig McCoy in his match in the same round. Having to fight for every point he earned, Keeley just barely got by in two straight 21-19, 21-19. McCoy, playing far older than his 18 years would indicate, just needs that added seasoning before he vaults to the top of the game.

The greatest number of entries of any bracket was the Men's C Singles where 72 contestants played and played and played before a winner was finally decided. The grueling three matches in one day (Saturday) was too tough for many of the entrants, but not so for Tim Pool who won the bracket 21-18, 21-14 over Joe Sills in the finals.

NOTES OF THE TOURNAMENT

... Hats off to all the people who did an outstanding job, but especially people like Don Jackson for his pre and during tournament promotion; Bill and Steve Dunn for their co-operation and floor managing expertise; Len Stream, for the use of his beautiful facility; and to every one of the fine employees of the Supreme Court I who did their best to make everyone happy ... Champagne on the house after the finals was a nice and fitting touch to the tournament's finale ... Many of the players found the time to visit the neighboring San Francisco area for sightseeing and great dining ... Good players like Gordon Kelly, Bill Thurman, Mike Zeitman, Marty Hogan, Bill Dunn, Dave Charlson and Trey Sayes, couldn't make the round of eight ... All agreed that the added competition from having all the players in the tournament made it that much better ... And to the D.B. Frampton Company, again our thanks for their help and support.



Silvia Hooks, about to hit a forehand ceiling, was the surprise of the tournament, placing second in the ladies pro-am.

“Racquetball Is On The Way Up”

By Edwin Darby, Sun Times Financial Editor

In 1973 something like 250,000 Americans were upsetting quite a few more people, mostly athletic young men, by invading athletic clubs and gymnasiums around the country and marching onto the handball courts, racquet in hand. A racquet on a handball court? It was far more outrageous than orange baseballs or soccer-style kickers in football.

And matters got far worse last year. The small army of racquet swingers tripled to 750,000. And some of them were women.

It got so a handball player with a decent respect for the traditions had to book court time weeks in advance if he wanted to play the real game.

Like many of the 750,000, Charles Cedarholm is the worst kind of racquetball enthusiast. He was an avid handball player; he resented the racquet people, and he refused to have anything to do with the new game. Then he went over to the enemy and now he's racquetball exclusively.

But as one of the partners of Wendt Cedarholm Tippens Corporation, architects and planners, Cedarholm tries to do what he can to keep the peace between the two camps.

The firm, with offices in Northfield, Illinois, acts as the construction consultant to both the U.S. Handball Assn. and the U.S. Racquetball Assn. (Both those associations are headquartered in Skokie and both are headed by Robert Kendler of Community Builders, known informally the country over as the father of racquetball.)

Growing sport

Wendt Cedarholm and Tippens

have already done six racquetball-handball indoor clubs, including the Court House in Northbrook and new clubs are on the drawing boards in New York, Detroit, and St. Louis.

The sport is only going to grow, partner Forrest D. Wendt argues. And that despite the recession. He thinks the "Sunday afternoon five-hour television orgy" has definitely waned and the switch to participatory sports, like tennis, will continue to boom.

One reason: it is a family sport. Everybody can play. Or, at least, everyone except the small children. The firm always recommends that new clubs include a nursery among the facilities offered.

Wendt's belief that the recession won't really set back the growth of racquetball is based partly on that concept. Play is good and relatively inexpensive recreation, close to home, at a time when economic reasons and the cost of travel in dollars and in energy may incline the family to stick closer to home.

The firm has also designed tennis clubs, but partner William C. Tippens points out one economic factor on the side of growth for racquetball: you can build six racquetball courts in the space required for one tennis court.

The three architects, all products of the University of Illinois School of Architecture, all in the mid-40s, all devoted to what they've called "good, decent, contemporary design," have been together since 1967.

They are not into residential design and this past year or so they are just as happy. But the firm has always had an otherwise diversified practice and the men credit

that diversity as much as anything with the apparent health of their business today. If the firm has specialized, it has been in library design; 12 new libraries or additions have come out of the office.

Right now, racquetball aside, the firm is working on two fascinating projects.

Special center

One is the design of a community center and "crime prevention center" with a "30-day" house in southwest Lawndale, under the sponsorship of the Rev. John Erwin, founder of the Pace Institute at Cook County Jail. "There's nothing like this in the entire country," says Tippens, "and we've never had such a rewarding experience as we've had working with the people of Lawndale."

The other is a far cry. It'll be what might be described as the world's fanciest junkyard. The design is for Allstate Insurance. As one of the country's largest auto insurers, the company ends up with a lot of cars that have been totaled or badly wrecked.

Some have to be junked. Some can be rebuilt and sold. For a 27-acre plot near Wheeling, Ill., the architects are designing a facility where cars can be stripped and crushed into junk or straightened away and repaired. Allstate's first demand: the facilities must be so designed that residents of Wheeling will see and hear no evil.

The world's fanciest yard will also have an auction market and an Allstate university — to train insurance appraisers.

"This is going to be a white glove operation all the way," says Tippens.

Keeley Cops Livonia

Keeley (eyes closed) and Serot, r. had another of their thrilling battles in the finals.

A new club, new faces and but no new winners emerged in the N.R.C.'s pro-am tournament December 12-15 in Livonia, Michigan. The event was highlighted by outstanding pro matches, great action in the amateur open, and a dramatic comeback in the women's finals.

San Diego's Steve Keeley re-entered the champion's circle this time around as he defeated his Leach Industries partner Steve Serot in the finals. Scores were a titillating 21-14, 19-21, 21-19. The victory evened the series between the top two N.R.C. touring pros at two wins apiece.

Second seeded Tom Carpenter, Warren, Michigan blasted number one seed Fred Lewerenz to capture the Men's Amateur Open title, 21-6, 21-11 in a full 32 field bracket.

And Kathy Williams, Racquettime's manager and tournament director, despite a 12-0 deficit and a blood gushing gash in her forehead, managed to come back in the third game to win the Women's Pro-Am Open over Sue Carow, Glenview, Illinois. Scores were 15-21, 21-9, 21-19.

Racquettime is a brand new 14-court racquetball/handball "court club" in suburban Livonia, just outside Detroit. It's concept is



unusual for the midwest in that there are no membership fees, just hourly court rental. The facility opened in October and has been bursting from the seams with racquetballers almost from day one.

The Serot-Keeley finals was another of their typical cliffhangers. Each man knows the other's

style so well that the match becomes a combination of great gets, tremendous shots and fantastic finesse.

But each is comfortable with the other on the court, and the match, although close throughout and for \$1,300 first place prize money saw only 10 hinders called, and an un-

FINALS

GAME 1

Serot 0 1 0 0 0 1 0 3 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 4 1 0 0 1 1 0 1 — 14

Keeley 0 0 4 0 0 3 0 0 0 0 2 1 2 1 1 0 0 0 0 0 2 1 2 2 — 21

Kills — Keeley 25, Serot 18; Passes — Keeley 10, Serot 10; Errors — Keeley 8, Serot 10; Aces — Serot 1; Hinders — 4; Time Outs — Keeley 1, Serot 1.

GAME 2

Keeley 0 0 0 5 4 0 0 0 1 0 1 1 0 2 0 0 3 0 1 0 0 1 0 — 19

Serot 0 0 0 4 1 1 0 1 0 2 0 3 1 1 0 0 1 1 3 0 0 1 1 — 21

Kills — Serot 24, Keeley 26; Passes — Serot 13, Keeley 10; Errors — Serot 4, Keeley 7; Aces — None. Hinders — 5; Time Outs — Keeley 2; Avoidable Hinder — Keeley 1.

GAME 3

Serot 1 4 3 1 0 1 4 0 0 0 1 0 1 1 0 1 1 — 19

Keeley 3 1 1 0 0 8 0 0 2 3 0 0 0 0 2 0 1 — 21

Kills — Keeley 27, Serot 18; Passes — Keeley 4, Serot 5; Errors — Keeley 13, Serot 6; Aces — None. Hinders — 1. Time Outs — Keeley 1, Serot 1.

believably miniscule amount of one hinder in the third game.

The first game was ebb and flow with Keeley constantly keeping the upper hand. He broke first from the gate grabbing quick 4-1 and 7-2 leads and then managed to bolt to a 14-6 advantage. During this span the curly-haired veterinarian was killing the ball well, especially off the serve. Serot on the other hand, was erring frequently and the combination made for Keeley's margin.

But Serot turned the momentum around, tallied four times in the 17th inning, held Keeley on his service and closed to 12-14. Two Keeley points in the 21st frame hurt and when he followed with three more in the next two innings, Serot was done. Final score was 21-14.

Keeley again started well in the second game, but his probable joy from a five point fourth inning was tainted when Serot scored four times in his half to cut the lead to one. They jockeyed back forth from this point, with both players playing extremely well, — few errors, pinpoint kills, and accurate passes. The only flaw in the mid-part of the game was an avoidable hinder called on Keeley, but it did not break his concentration.

By the 12th inning the game was tied 12-all and then 14-all in the 14th frame. This was just plain, old fashioned top racquetball, as the points were scored on kills and passes, not errors and skips.

A three point 19th inning by

Serot overcame Keeley's 18-16 advantage and turned the game around. Keeley finally put Serot out by killing the serve into the left corner with his backhand.

Two innings later Keeley knotted the score at 19 with a forehand corner kill into the right corner, but a perfect Serot forehand pass down the forehand side gave the younger Steve the serve. After one of the few hinders of the match (number three of the game) Serot won point 20 on a v-pass to the left. Point 21 was a plum for the picking on the next rally, but Steve badly mis-hit the set-up and the resulting skip ball gave Keeley the serve.

A long series ensued with each player making fantastic diving gets and controlling the play at different points in the rally. Finally, Serot killed a forehand in the left corner to regain the serve. And game point came moments later with another forehand kill straight into the front wall.

In the third game Keeley erased a 10-5 Serot lead in the sixth inning with an eight point rally, — five consecutive kills, a Serot error and two more kills. Even a Serot time out didn't stem the tide, as Keeley moved to his 13-10 advantage.

It didn't take Serot long to regroup, however as the 18-year-old southpaw tallied four times in the next inning to regain the lead. They played cat and mouse from that point on until Keeley grabbed the serve and a 20-19 lead in the 17th inning.

A tremendous rally followed, and was ended after each player dove at least three times, with a Keeley forehand kill for the match.

The women's pro-am final was the drama match of the tournament as home court favorite Kathy Williams battled her midwest rival Sue Carow for the \$250.00 first place prize.

Carow, who has never defeated Williams in tournament competition, was ready for this one. She had everything going for her, the percentages, a newly developed ceiling ball, and Kathy's weariness from running the tournament.

A big lead developed into a coasting win in the first game for the little Glenview, Illinois gal, as she captured it 21-15.

"I felt good after the first game," said Sue. "I was confident I could end the match in two straight."

It didn't happen that way, however, as Williams, spurred on by her local cheering section, completely dominated play both offensively and defensively in game two. It went to Kathy 21-9.

Figuring Williams had regained her powerful game, most fans expected another blowout in the third. Again, the sages were proved wrong as Carow, showing exceptional speed, control and finesse just outthrust Williams from the gun.

"I just couldn't get going out there," said Kathy. "I wasn't moving to the ball, just standing around in deep court."

And that's about where she was as the score mounted to 12-0 during an extended rally involving ceiling balls and drives to the backhand side. It was in this situation that Kathy failed to move out of Sue's way and was accidentally struck in the face by Sue's aluminum edged racquet.

As blood exploded from Kathy's face a sickening silence gripped the crowd. Fearing either eye or nose damage two doctors raced to court side for emergency treatment. Fortunately the wound was vertical over the bridge of the nose slightly toward the right eye.

After a 15 minute injury time out, and with doctor's approval play was continued, Kathy's forehead swathed in bandages.

As she entered the court the score was now 13-0, as the

courageous referee awarded the injury point to Carow on an avoidable hinder. Nobody knew for sure how long Kathy could continue and after seven or eight rallies, blood began trickling down her face.

But she gutted it out and slowly closed the point gap.

"I knew she was coming back," said Carow, **"but I couldn't regain any momentum. I felt so bad about hitting her, I guess I lost my drive."**

As Williams edged closer and closer the gallery became louder and louder sensing an all-time great performance. And when the score reached 19-all, 20-19 and finally 21-19 for Williams, Racquettime's new walls echoed a thunderous ovation.

Tom Carpenter's upset win over Fred Lewerenz was the tournament's surprise as most people had virtually awarded the first place trophy to Fred. But young Tom played extremely well and really controlled the match from beginning to end. The scores were 21-6, 21-11.

The men's pro semi-finals saw the emergence of Rich Wagner, the 19-year-old University of San Diego freshman. Wagner upset fourth

seeded Dan Alder in three games in the round of eight, 21-9 in the third and then shocked everyone by taking the heralded Serot to three in the upper bracket semi-final.

Moving gracefully and with the quickness of a cockroach, Wagner was all over the court and captured the second game 21-12 after a 21-7 first game loss. Serot regained his advantage in the third, however, calling on tournament experience and poise to take the match 21-13.

In the bottom bracket Ron Strom and Keeley met in the other semi-final and the games were close and well played. Southpaw Strom, just now emerging as a top eight national player couldn't quite cope with Keeley's control and succumbed 21-15, 21-16.

"He's getting tougher every tournament," said Keeley of Strom. **"It's a good thing for the other players he's only been on the tour less than a year."**

Strom captured third place over Wagner 21-17, 16-21, 21-2 as Wagner felt the strain of tournament conditioning in the third game.

The highlight of the quarter-final round was the Marty Hogan-Keeley match. Hogan, the 17-year-old St. Louis schoolboy was on his

rapidly-improving game and it was all Keeley could do to hang on against the loquacious youngster. He did, 21-18, 21-20.

The other two quarter-final matches found Serot topping Minneapolis' Paul Ikier 21-11 twice, and Strom ripping San Diego's Charlie Drake 21-4, 21-5.

The women's semi's included a good match in the upper bracket as Northbrook, Illinois' Jean Sauser battled Williams but came up short 21-11, 21-15. The other semi wasn't such a good match as San Diego's Betty Johnson was beaten soundly by Carow 21-12, 21-3.

Johnson came back strong to capture third over Sauser 10-21, 21-20, 21-12.

In the men's amateur bracket Carpenter had to go three games to reach the finals, defeating Elgin, Illinois' John Duewel 17-21, 21-19, 21-10 in the bottom bracket, while Lewerenz defeated Ron DeMunter, Wyoming, Michigan, 21-6, 21-17.

In the quarters Carpenter topped Fred Weigand, Troy 15 and 12, Duewel bested Jim Easterling, Taylor 21-15, 13-21, 21-14, DeMunter defeated Jim Pruitt, Lansing 11 and 17, and Lewerenz topped Mark Weigand 10 and 10.

NOTES OF THE TOURNAMENT

... Kathy Williams and her outstanding staff were delightfully efficient while handling the running of the tourney ... owner Pat McPharlin was on hand throughout and his facility is one of the most beautiful in the country. The great success in its short life is leading McPharlin to invest in other court clubs in the Detroit area ... A Saturday night party at the host hotel was a nice gathering with eats and drinks for all ... A near blizzard Sunday made it a challenge for many players to make their flights home ... Kathy Williams injury was virtually closed up by the time she reached a medical center and no stitches were necessary.

Irene Ackerman captured the women's consolation championships with a 21-7, 21-7 victory over Weenie Blikken ... Don Miller captured the men's consolation title over Jack Licata, 21-16, 21-9.

Carow (shooting) against Williams, - a comeback not to be soon forgotten.



A record number of participants in the fifth annual Illinois State Singles tournament witnessed something never before seen in any of their championships, — Ron Rubenstein had to work for his title.

Pushed all the way, Ruby beat back the state champ of the future, 20-year-old Jeff Bowman, a junior from downstate University of Illinois. The scores were 21-16, 21-19 and indicated the great match played by Bowman.

Two hundred and thirty-six entrants, over double any previous year's high, participated in the seven brackets of play. The tournament was run at The Court House in the Chicago suburb of Schaumburg. The eight courts at The Court House were in constant use the entire weekend.

The highlight of the Rubenstein-Bowman match came in game two when after Ruby jumped to a 15-8 lead, Bowman put together a string of eight consecutive points to take the upper hand. It was all Rubenstein could do to stay even and then finally get the necessary points to capture the crown.

In the women's open an unfortunate incident resulted in Jean

Rubenstein Still

Number One In

Land of Lincoln

Sauser having to default the finals to Sue Carow after the girls had split the first two games.

On the third point of the third game, Carow had a backhand set-up in center court and everybody, including Sauser thought Sue would shoot it in the right corner, one of her favorite shots. Instead Sue put the ball up, trying to hit a Z-ball and Sauser who was racing in to cover the kill, ran smack into the follow through. The 13-stitch gash over her nose was closed minutes later at a nearby hospital.

Tournament chairman Fred Blaess won the seniors title, in a thrilling match against Urbana's

Don Webb. The men split the first two games, Blaess winning number one 21-11, and Webb coming back 21-15. And the third was right out of the movies as it went down to 20-20 where each man had at least four shots at the match point. And true to the script, Blaess, before his home court fans, put in the 21st and victory.

The Masters singles held a bit more than the normal amount of personal satisfaction for winner Phil Dziuk, Champaign. He defeated defending champ Bob Troyer, Lake Forest in the finals 21-18, 14-21, 21-16. It marked Dziuk's first Masters triumph after finishing second for three consecutive years.

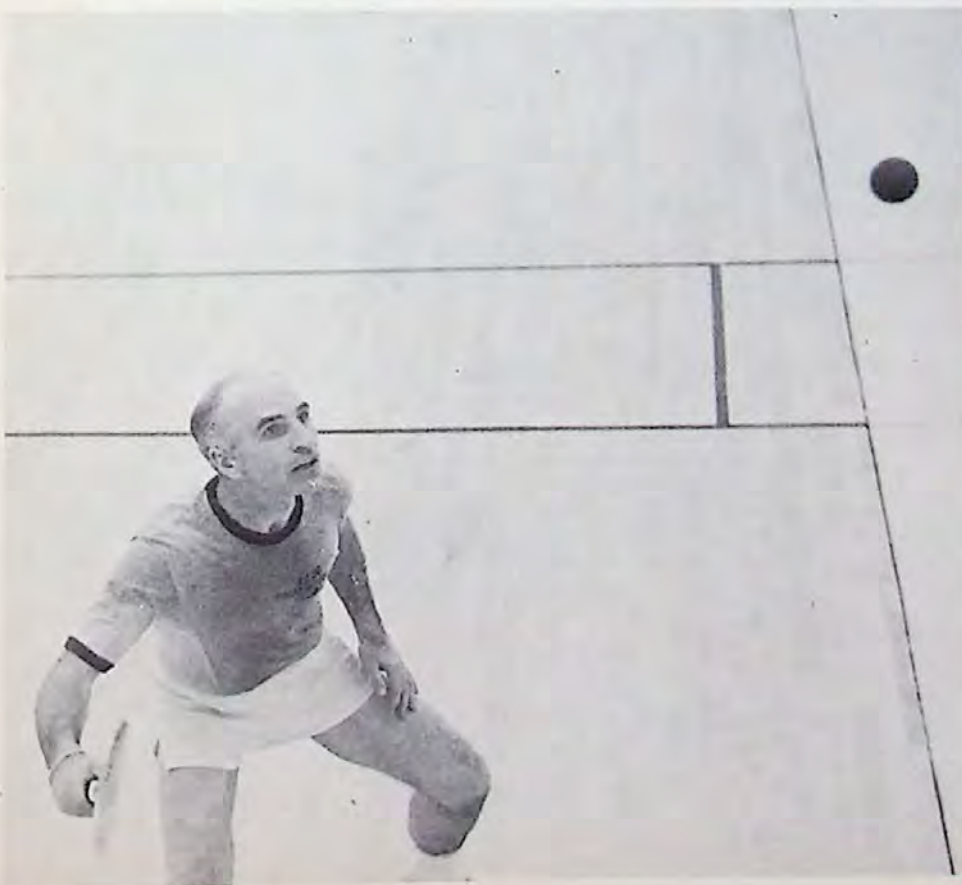
Men's B had the unbelievable number of 128 entries, forcing the tournament to hold the first two rounds 31 point matches. The B's were an exercise in conditioning and endurance and many fine players couldn't make the trip. As it turned out only two seeded players made it to the quarter finals, and they met each other with Gary Gerschke, the eventual winner, defeating Paul Heigold.

By the time the finals came around it was Gerschke topping U. of I.'s Scott Hemphill 21-12, 21-8 for the title.

Top seeded Hope Schwartz captured the Women's B over Linda Holder by the scores of 21-11, 21-19. It was the first time this

To next page

Phil Dziuk, Champaign, finally captured the Masters singles title after three years of second places. Here Phil takes one off the back wall.



bracket has been a part of Illinois state tournaments and all the gals who participated enjoyed it.

Another first time event was juniors and again none of the seeded players went anywhere, — in fact both of the two seeds lost in the first round. Neal Scheyer captured the first place trophy, 21-13, 21-10 over David Lee.

Third place went to Gil Schmitt over John Hart by default in the Open; Bev Franks over Fran Deuster 20-21, 21-14, 21-8 in the Women's Open; Bill Williamson over Bob Breckenridge 21-11, 21-1 in the Seniors; Don Schmidt over Jack Ward 20-21, 21-12, 21-6 in the Masters; Marshall Peterson over Tim O'Brien 21-5, 21-7 in the B Singles; Debi Irving over Sue Loomis 21-10, 21-14 in the Women's B; and Ken Stone over Steve La Gorio 21-7, 21-15 in the juniors.

So many people did so much to help make this tournament a success, it goes without saying that we'll miss somebody in saying thank you's. A general "thank's so much" to everybody who helped from refereeing to mixing the Gatorade. But special and warm thanks to the following people, without whom tourney directors Blaess and Chuck Leve would not have kept their sanity: Sue Kanar, Bill Feigen, Dan Rymsa, Sue Carow, Lois Dowd, Marsha Berger, Bob Troyer, Lee Humphrey, Roger Eggert, John Lynch, Marcia Kennedy and Connie Johnson.

And to those firms who donated equipment, food and beverages we extend our thanks, — Stokely Van Camp, Gatorade Division, Leach Industries, Ektelon, Voit, Omega Sports, Wyler's Foods, Shelly's Deli, Vittert Sports, Sports Awards and Seamco Sporting Goods.

Much discussion has been going on here to find ways and means to alleviate the problem of number of matches due to the great amount of entries. When an eight court facility can barely accommodate the tournament, forcing the elimination of any consolation rounds, the event is too big. If any other state people from around the country have hit on some miracle solution to this problem we would appreciate your comments. Contact Fred Blaess, President, Illinois Racquetball Association, 4101 Dempster St., Skokie, IL 60076.

King's Court Open In May

The King's Court have scheduled their 5th Annual Invitational for May 2, 3, & 4. There will be seven divisions: Open Singles, Open Doubles, Senior Singles, Senior Doubles, Women Singles, Women Doubles, & "B" Singles. (Open to anyone who has not previously en-

tered an open tournament.)

This year we will have \$500 in merchandise prizes as well as the customary hospitality tournament souvenirs, T-shirts, and trophy. We are looking forward to another great tournament and good time for all.



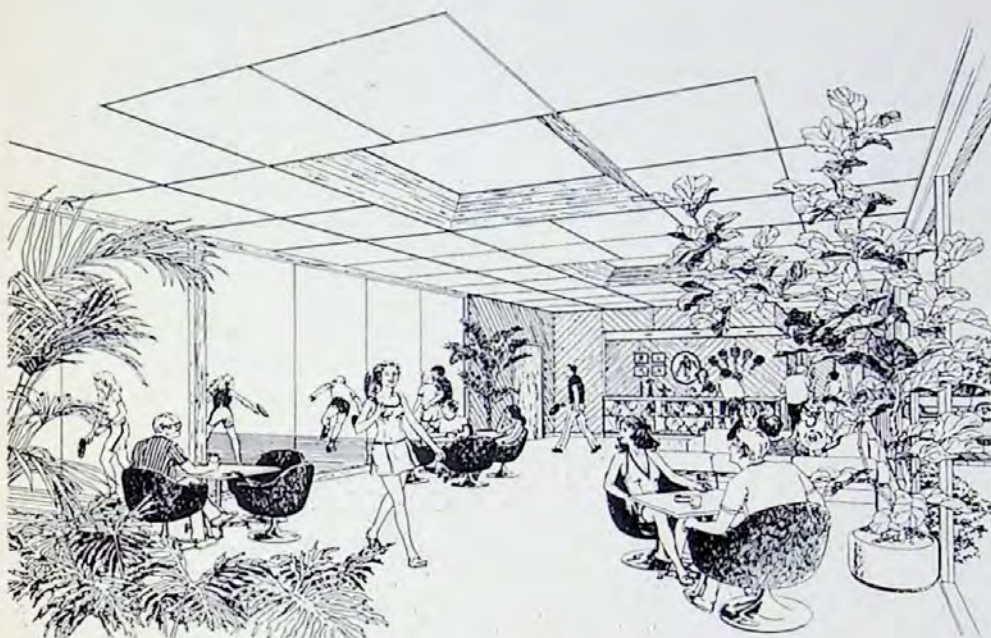
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New L.A. Court Club Now Under Construction



Construction has commenced on the CENTER COURTS, a private sports complex specifically for racquetball and handball.

The 14,000 square foot facility is located in the Brentwood Business Center, at La Grange and Armacost, West Los Angeles. It will house eight regulation racquetball-handball courts, men's and women's locker rooms, sauna, complete pro shop, children's nursery with attendant, two glass exhibition courts and a lounge with backgammon and other games available.

Completion of the CENTER COURTS is slated for April 1, 1975. Introductory membership fees have been set at \$20.00 for individual and \$30.00 for family memberships for the rest of 1975. A nominal hourly court rental fee will be charged. The Club will be open 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on weekends. Members may reserve time in advance.

The owners of the CENTER COURTS, Mike McClelland and Gary Gullette, pointed out that racquetball is the fastest growing sport in America today. The game is the easiest of all racquet sports to pick up quickly; provides good exercise and may be played by men, women and children.

Fourth Seminar-Meeting National Court Clubs Association

June 21-23, 1975

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— and Athletic Center

Full details: Mort Leve, NCCA, 4101 Dempster st.,
Skokie, IL 60076 Area Code 312. 673 4000.

Three In A Row For Joe In Wisconsin State Tourney

By Bob Keenan

For the third consecutive year Joe Wirkus captured the Wisconsin state singles racquetball title, this time at the recently-completed Western Racquet Club of Green Bay. Combining six indoor tennis courts, five racquetball/handball courts plus a cocktail lounge and grille, this facility made ideal surroundings for the annual event. Two of the five courts feature full glass back walls with seating capacity of 300.

The three day event drew 75 of Wisconsin's finest players in three classes, — Open, Seniors and Masters. A full 32 field draw in the open made Wirkus work extremely hard for his unprecedented title. Second round action saw Joe pushed to three games by improved Cary Nusslock of Milwaukee. In the semi's Wirkus topped Bill Harper, Eau Claire and in the lower bracket second seeded Galen Johnson, Green Bay bested Tom Wirkus, Joe's brother, from Fond du Lac.

Thus the stage was set for the Wirkus-Johnson showdown for the crown, — a match pitting two doubles partners against one another. With Johnson hailing from Green Bay, the home town fans really turned out to cheer him on, filling the courts to capacity. The match was scheduled for 2 p.m. and by 1 p.m. all seats were sold (at \$1.00 per head) plus four deep standing room only.

Responding to the local encouragement Johnson raced to an early 12-2 first game lead and captured game one 21-11. Wirkus was under pressure to win the second game, which he did in overwhelming fashion, 21-6.

Game three was a barn burner with both players playing extremely hard to 12-12. Both had used two time-outs at this point. Johnson then ran four straight to 16-12 with the crowd, now sensing a home town victory, applauding wildly with each point.

After taking a time out at this juncture, Wirkus came back and tied the score at 16-all. Johnson took it to 18-16 and Wirkus came back to 18-18, where Johnson used this third and final time out. Both players were extremely fatigued at this point and were taking as much time as possible between serves. Wirkus then tallied two more for 20-18, lost service, came back in again and tallied number 21 for the title. Total match time: two hours, 20 minutes!

In the seniors event it was the former two time state champ Dan Trost, revenging an earlier tournament loss, by defeating fellow Milwaukeean Joe Carini 21-14, 21-15.

In the Masters finals, Jim White and John Fazio, reigning National Masters Doubles champs, met each other with White coming out on top 17-21, 21-9, 21-10.

Third place in the open went to Harper, who defeated Tom Wirkus.

Third place in the seniors to Bill Jukich, Milwaukee over Gerry Hoff and third place Masters to Green Bay's Chuck Austin over Fred Vetter, Milwaukee.

A new concept in consolation play was attempted with excellent results. All first and second round losers were placed in the consolation bracket. This made for a tougher than usual consolation round. The winner in open consolation was Dennis Olson, who defeated Bob Keenan. Seniors consolation went to Frank Klode and Masters consolation to Hank Krause.

A special thanks must be paid to Western Racquet Club manager Gary Luebke. He acted as Tournament Director and floor manager for the three day event and worked extremely hard during and prior to the tourney. A special thanks to Gary's beautiful assistants behind the counter, — Mary Truttmann and Kathy Austin.

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DEAR EDITOR:

....now that I have your attention....

Use For Split Balls

Dear Editor:

This is in response to the letter by Nancy Steinbacher in the December issue concerning waste of damaged racquetballs. She will be pleased to know that I have found an excellent use for these in my surgical practice. I give them to patients who have had hand surgery or some type of wrist or arm problem requiring hand exercises. The intact ball is too difficult to squeeze for a painful hand, whereas one that has been ruptured has the right amount of give to allow the fingers to flex completely. Of course those that are nearly split in half, unfortunately usually by some of my opponents on the racquetball court, are not useful in this regard. However, my dog does like to chew on these.

The used beer cans which she mentioned might also be used for squeezing exercises, but I am afraid not by my patients.

Hal E. Houston, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Murray, Kentucky 42071

P.S. Would you please tell me if my subscription is current? I thoroughly enjoy the magazine and hope that the association grows as I am sure it will.

Strom Fan

Gentlemen:

As president of our racquetball association, I would like to take you up on your offer of a free rule book as advertised in the December issue of *National Racquetball*. You may send it to me at the Association's address.

I really enjoyed the December issue of the magazine and particularly enjoyed reading the writeups about Ron Strom. Being from Minnesota, I know Ron and have watched him play at a number of tournaments in Minnesota including last year's Minnesota championship match against Schmidtke. Having also played against Schmidtke myself in that same tournament and having been lucky to walk off the court alive, I was rooting like hell for Ron.

Thank you very much.

J. William Cragun,
Redwood Falls, MN

Grateful Handballer

Dear Chuck:

My name is Bud Yates, a long time member of the U.S. Handball Association and proud of it!

Enclosed is my check and application for a three year gift subscription to the N.R.C. and NATIONAL RACQUETBALL for Dr. D.B. Miller an orthopedic surgeon to whom I am very grateful. Dr. Miller, only last month removed a medial meniscus from my knee. He has been very helpful and concerned with my case in order to get me back into the courts as soon as possible.

I first met Dr. Miller in the handball court a few years ago but because of his promising career as an orthopedic surgeon he switched to racquetball to lessen the danger of injuring his hands. He is a very avid and dedicated player and I'm sure he will enjoy your publication. I received a complimentary copy in September and was glad I did as it had excellent articles on various injuries one of which was my particular problem.

Since Dr. Miller has been so super I would like his subscription to begin immediately and, if at all possible, could you send him the past issues from September '74 on?

Well, I seem to have gotten carried away with this pen. Keep up the good work in both the U.S.H.A. and N.R.C. If you see Dr. Steve August in your travels tell him I said hello.

Bud Yates
Warren, Michigan

Thanks R.W.K.

Dear Mr. Kendler:

I would like to take this time to thank you for all that you have done for me and the whole racquetball tour this year.

Racquetball is a great sport and you yourself have been responsible for the tremendous growth of it. With you at its head, racquetball is destined to become as big as tennis and golf.

Once again, I would like to thank you for giving me this chance.

Richard Wagner
San Diego

In The Beginning . . .

By Steve Keeley

. . . And the earth was without form and a basic zilch before the great creation. During this era of nothingness the world was composed solely of concrete and space, and God was not getting off on the idea of such a blah omnipotence. So He said, "**Let there be a firmament in the midst of this vast void,**" and lo, suddenly there stood a hollow superstructure measuring 20 feet in height, and twice as long as high, and half as wide as long. And God dubbed His architectural wonder a cement chicken coop, but upon deeper inner searching deemed this far too funky a name and thereby called it more simply, — a racquetball court.

. . . And the spirit of the Almighty dwelt somewhat glumly in each of the four court corners as the morning became evening and the evening morning. It was on the second day that God began harboring feelings of foolishness at hanging out within this great concrete box and therefore said, "**Let there be red lines down here, and ventilation up there with a minimum air flow**

'...and God dubbed his architectural wonder
a 'Cement chicken Coop'."



of 600 cubic litres per turn of the hourglass. And, by God, let there be satisfactory light within this firmament." And it was so.

. . . And again the night fell and the sun dissipated the darkness and it was the third day and still little action. Soon thereafter God gathered the dust from the corners and the cobwebs from the ceiling. He snapped His fingers expertly and said in a deep voice, "**ABRAKADABRA!**" Whereupon the seas rose and the seas fell and everywhere the thunder applauded the lightning. The emptiness instantly yielded a peculiarly shaped instrument of jet-age fiber glass and nylon. And God spoke again, "**Behold!**" And from the nothingness there appeared a hollow rubber sphere which bounced once . . . bounced twice . . . and broke into two. And God said, "**this is not good.**"

. . . And the sun rose and fell twicfold more and it was on the fifth day that the Lord came up with a divinely round ball which He personally sanctified for one week or 10 games, whichever cometh first.

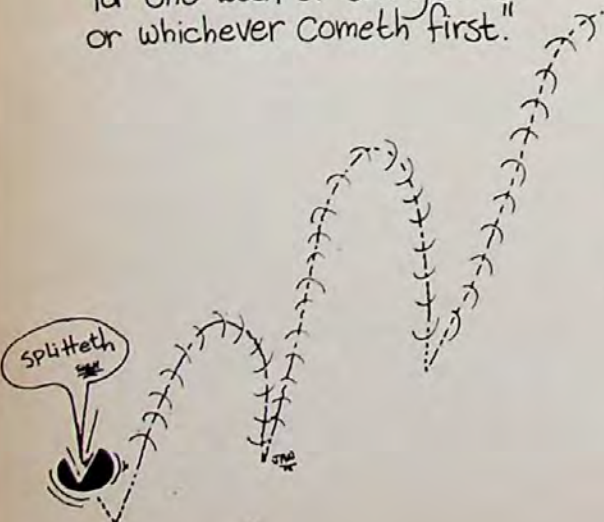
. . . And still loneliness lingered heavily within the heavenly facility.

Thereupon on the sixth day God got it all together and conjured up an upright beast of bone and blood, having apposing thumbs and forefingers and this entity took the fiber glass and nylon innovation into a hand and smote the rubber sphere again and again. As a second thought He created also a second being to position itself upon its two appendages within the same slice of Heaven. The two creations took turns smoting and God saw that it was good.

. . . And the Master Workman saw everything He had made and knew it was very, very big stuff.

. . . And He issued forth a proclamation, speaking in simple words and parables. And He uttered, "**Hark, my earthly images. There will soon come the day when I shall send forth my offspring to walk upon the hallowed hardwood. He shall reek of holiness and all shall revere Him piously. For my kid cometh to show you the strokes and the way of the court. He shall give forth numerous donuts and strike abundant freak balls and perform other miracles**

"... Which he personally sanctified
for one week or ten games
or whichever cometh first."



To next page

In The Beginning

of Heavenly goodness. His spirit shall pervade the court realm and His will be done even as the lion rules unchallenged as Lord of the jungles. Like a tree shall he be! He shall be hairy and sturdy as the moss-covered trunk, fleet as the zephyrs parting the branches and stealthy as the vegetation creeping amongst the tree's roots. Behold! This coming shall be an oak among saplings and thou shalt call him, **SEROT!**

Thus the court and players and proclamation were finished and it was the a.m. and p.m. of the seventh day when God blessed all which He had brought into being, saying, "Let this racquet multiply fruitfully across the earth from this generation forth."

... And it was so ...

Can You Think Of A Better Place To Play?

From page 4

Bob Kendler, now more than ever. The sport needs a strong guiding hand, an astute businessman to actively head the game's most aggressive and dynamic organizations. Mr. Kendler is that man.

Why does this man continue to work 18 hours a day? Why does he continue to invest his hard earned dollars into a sport he has never played? Why does he continue to take THE MOST ACTIVE part in racquetball's growth? He neither asks, nor expects, nor needs financial rewards. Why then?

Because he loves racquetball. He loves the people. He loves the competition. He loves the players. Bob Kendler may never make a nickel profit in racquetball. He couldn't care less, because he is laying the groundwork in the infant years for the game that will become the darling of the American sports scene. And he knows it.

What then, does he want? Simply, nothing. If one pro player were to walk up to him and say, "Thank



you, Bob, for giving me this opportunity," it would be enough. If one amateur player were to walk up to him and say, "Keep going, Bob, I believe in what you're doing," it

would be enough.

And even though I don't think it is enough, I would like to say it anyhow.

"Thank you, Bob."

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A Way To Stay Loose

Reprinted with permission of *Runner's World*.

By Patrick Ritchen R.P.T.

Ritchen is a Registered Physical Therapist in the Bronx, N.Y.

While participating in and observing athletics for most of my life, I have seen many ways of warming or loosening up. The majority of these methods are improperly performed and are contributing to hurting the competitor rather than helping him. Although he may feel looser due to increased blood flow to the muscles involved in the warmup, physiologically and biomechanically he may be sowing the seeds of disaster in the form of a pulled muscle.

As a physical therapist, I have become intimately involved in the workings of the body's musculoskeletal system. In order to make the system work most effectively, two rules must be kept in mind.

1. *A muscle works best when it is at its maximum length.* To use an analogy: a rubber band will snap the hardest when stretched to its maximum. Therefore, a long, properly stretched muscle will be more efficient — producing more power — than a shortened muscle.

2. *Stretching a muscle properly cannot be done by bobbing or quick motions, in any direction.* Quick motions, such as crossing ankles and bobbing to touch toes, actually promotes tightness.

As an example of how these quick motions can be harmful to you, as an athlete, try this experiment. Close your eyes. Place your elbow on a table with your arm up at 90 degrees, palm toward your face. Have someone grasp your hand while your eyes are closed.

Then, with your eyes closed and your partner not telling you, have him pull your hand quickly downward, extending your arm flat. The reflexes in the bicep inhibit the movement downward and you develop a reflex contraction of the biceps as it is being forcefully stretched.

Why does this happen? In the muscles of your body, there is a sensor system which reacts to sudden stretch. The muscle spindle, a macroscopic structure distributed widely in the muscles of

the body, facilitates contraction or shortening when muscles are "jerked" or overloaded quickly. If a muscle is stretched too quickly, it begins to reflexively contract to take up the load.

Another example. Someone hands you a stack of books in which you visually underestimate the weight. Your arms begin to stretch under the weight but the biceps reflexively contract to support the load. (There is also a sensor system in the tendons which reflexively inhibits any muscular contraction if the muscle is so overloaded that it would be impossible to hold the load by the muscle's interpretation. This is a safety device to avoid injury.)

How does this relate to bobbing? Each time you bob downward — again using the crossed ankles, hamstring stretch as an example — the hamstrings are stretched rapidly as you touch your hands to the ground, therefore being encouraged physiologically to contract.

Through my work and participation in athletics, I have been interested in proper muscle stretching techniques for a number of years. My interest was personalized, however, when marathon runner Dr. Norbert Sander asked me to suggest some useful exercises for his chronic hamstring soreness. (Dr. Sander, in addition to being one of the New York areas's outstanding runners, was the first person to turn me on to competitive running after years of casual jogging.)

My wife (also a physical therapist) and I decided to do a complete evaluation of his complaints, which alternated between his hamstring and low-back pain. Sitting on the floor with his legs outstretched, he could not touch the middle of his shins! Over years of competitive running, without proper flexibility exercises, he had developed immense tightness in his low back and hamstrings. This severely limited his ability to stay loose throughout a race, especially in races over 10 miles.

The low back is often ignored in the runner's warmup as well as many other sports. A little bending and leaning side-to-side is the most I have ever seen most athletes



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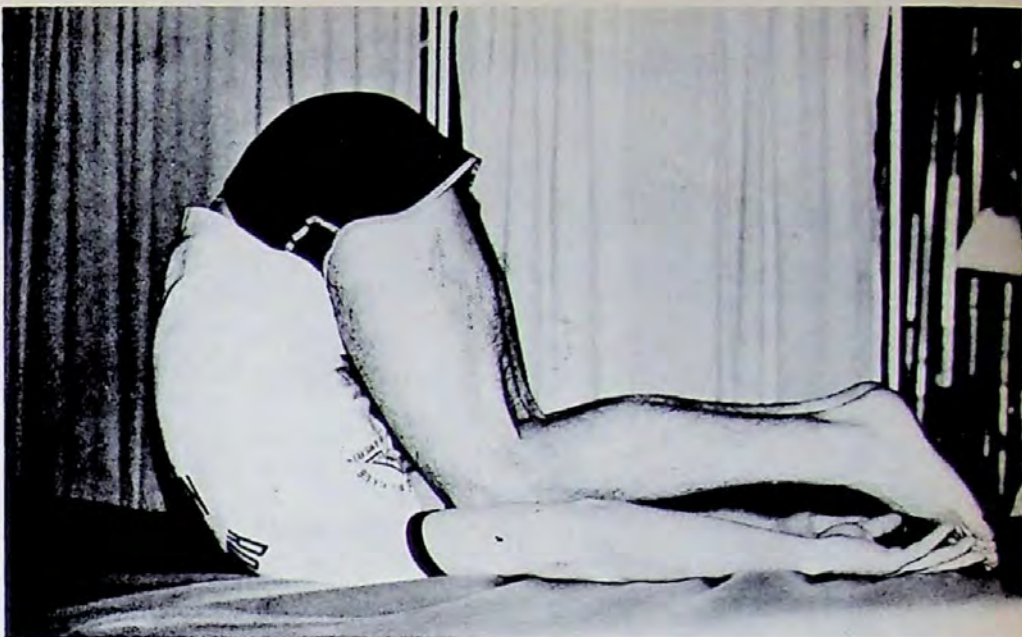
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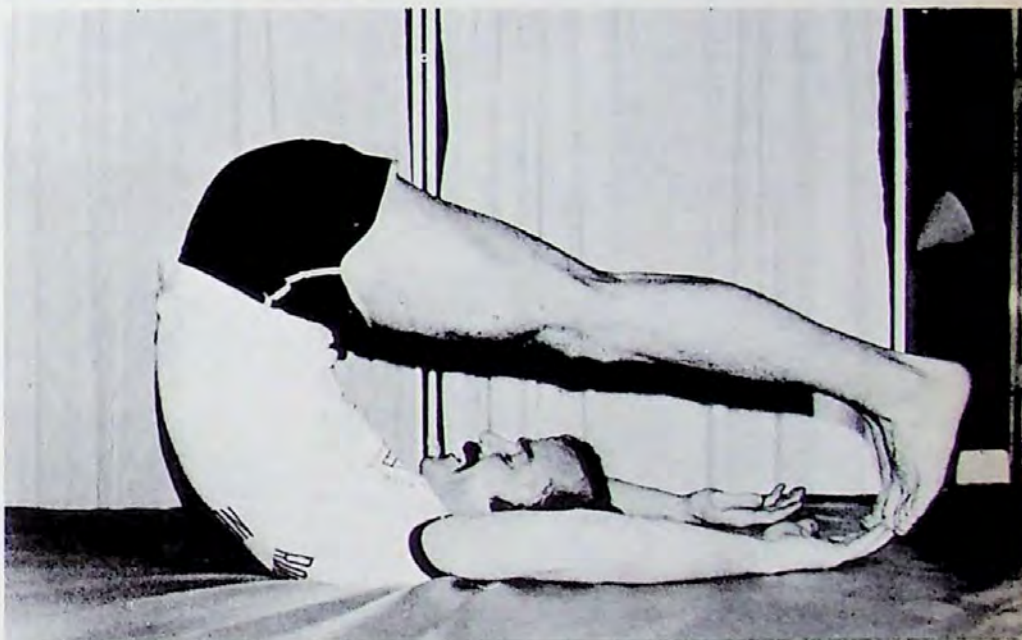
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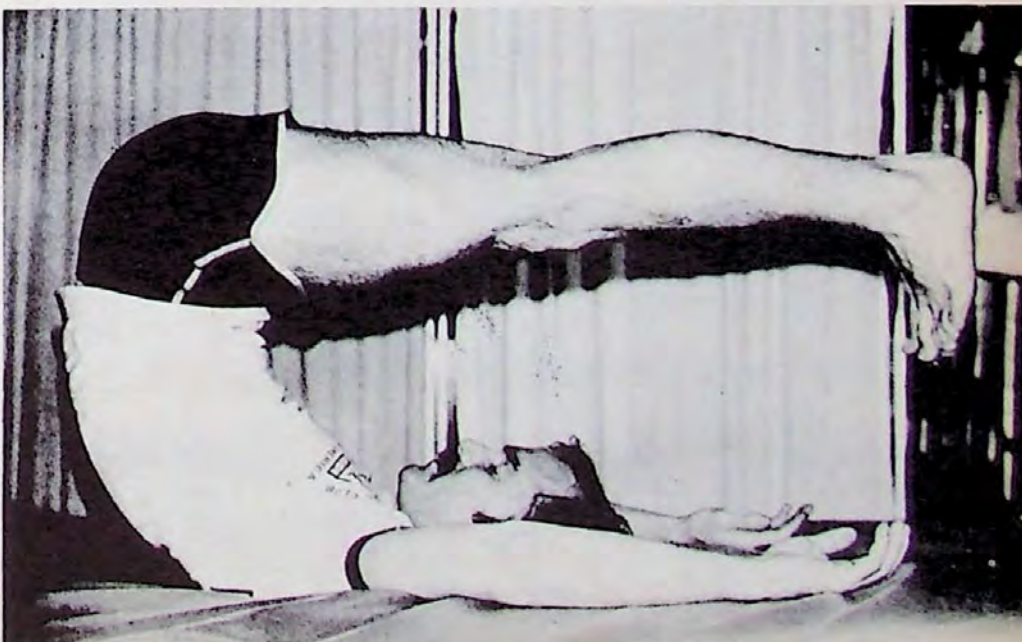
Assume this position, attempting to bring knees next to ears. Do not bounce! Sharp pain may be felt in sacral area. If unable to bear this pain (which increases as long-dormant muscles are stretched) bring legs up to position of tolerance. Then lower legs again. Continue to do exercises until knees can be rested next to temples or lower without pain.



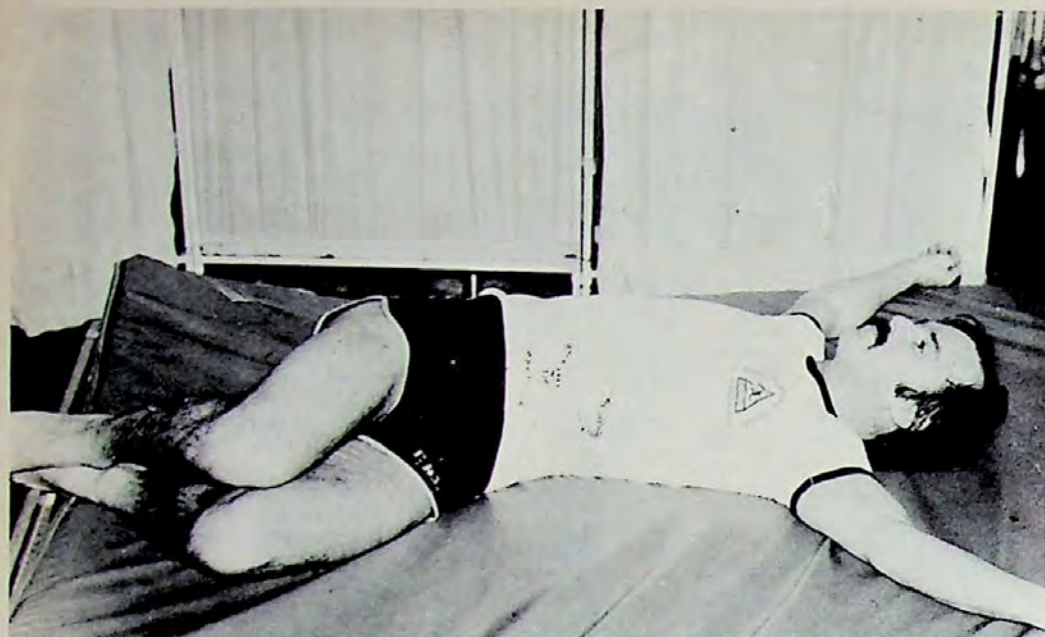
Keeping knees straight, slowly lower lower feet to floor. Initially this is very hard. Lower feet as much as possible, forcing knees to be straight. Count to 10, left feet, still keeping knees straight, to a more tolerable position.



Lower again. Goals are relative but you should work until legs are able to be parallel to the floor for at least one minute before going on. Ultimately you should be able to accomplish the position above.



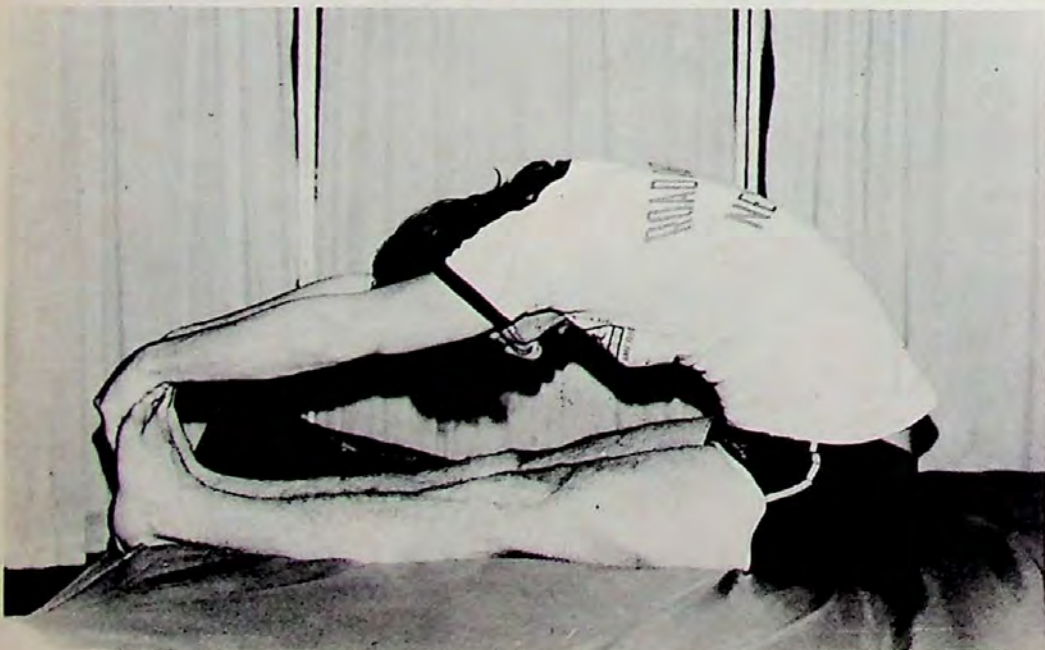
A Way to Stay Loose



Roll knees to side keeping shoulders on the floor. Hold to a count of 10. Reverse. At least five times to each side. Contract the trunk muscles forcibly when knees reach the mat as if you were attempting to rotate into the mat, keeping shoulders flat.



With quads tight, sit far forward and bring feet up and down. The trick is to keep knees straight. Thirty times. Then try to hold foot in the "up" position for a count of 15. Repeat three times.

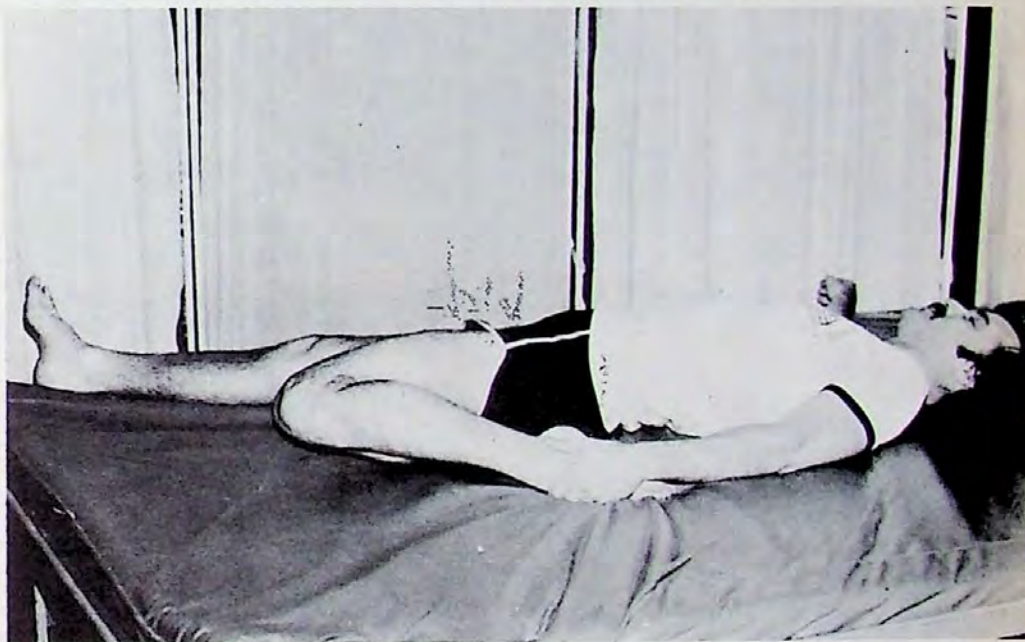


Grasping the balls of the feet with palms and keeping knees straight, lean over and hold your position as far forward as possible. Count to 20. Return to a more upright position if too uncomfortable. Bend forward without bobbing! Try to hold the position for longer than 20 counts.

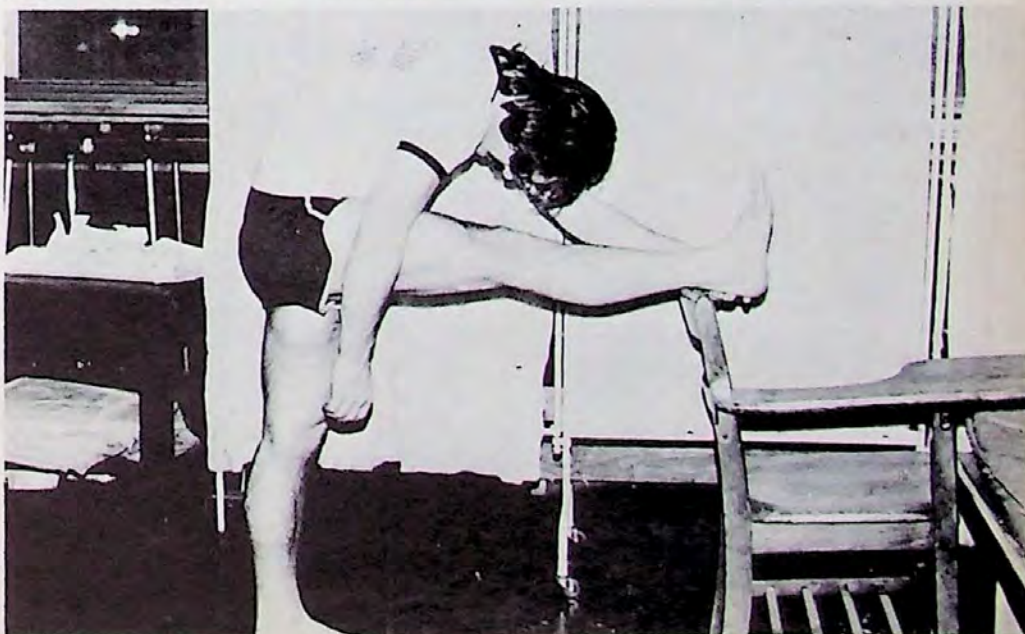
Resting on one knee, gradually slide the opposite foot away from center until groin area is stretched. Hold position of maximum stretch for at least a minute for each leg. Repeat three times. Guard self by leaning forward with hands on mat.



Grabbing ankle, lean back on the opposite hand and bend knee as far as tolerated. Then slowly force hip forward, stretching the front of the thigh. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat five times with each leg.



Place back of foot on a high resting spot and lean forward. Knees must be straight and no bouncing. Hold for 30 seconds with each leg, then reverse legs. Try to increase your bend with each repetition of the exercise, and also increase the amount of time you hold the position. At least five repetitions with each leg. (As an extra, try to bring the foot up while you are bent over maximally without bending the knees.) •



First Ohio State Draws 150 Entrants

For the first time on a state level the Ohio Racquetball Association held a tournament with competition in nine divisions: open mens' singles, open mens' doubles, senior mens' singles, masters mens' singles, college mens' singles, junior boys' singles, college ladies' singles, open ladies singles, and open ladies' doubles. There were over 150 entries for the tournament held at the new \$9 million dollar, eight court, physical education center at Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio on December 13, 14, 15.

There were many outstanding matches in all divisions, up to and including the finals, which make it too lengthy to report on each one. However, the most outstanding match was the final Open Men's Doubles.

In a fantastic three game match Robbie Abrams and Mark Hiudt, Cincinnati, defeated Jerry Davis and Jack Soble, Cleveland. The match was so well played it was unfortunate that one team had to lose. The games featured tremendously long volleys, impossible gets and digs and powerful kills. The referee had to insist that Hiudt take an injury time out to put bandages on floor burns that were bleeding from diving after so many shots. Davis too was playing with a hand badly swollen from diving for a shot. It was amazing that he was able to finish the match. The scores were 18-21, 21-18, 21-14. All players received a long round of applause from the gallery after the outstanding match. Abrams constantly amazed the gallery with his quickness and powerful backhand kill shots. Hiudt was a master at keeping the ball in play by digging out impossible shots. Davis and Soble countered time after time with bottom board kill shots. The match started at 3:00 P.M. on Sunday and was not over until after 6:00 P.M.

Many excellent doubles matches preceded the final match. Hiudt and Abrams defeated Mike Anzalone and Angelo Vecchio in three games 21-7, 17-21, 21-15. In the other semifinal Davis and Soble defeated Ken Mitchell and Dale Scheutzwow 21-8, 21-11.

The results of the other divisions were as follows:

Open Men's Singles: 1. Robbie Abrams, 2. Mark Hiudt, 3. Jerry Davis, 4. Jack Soble.

Senior Men's Singles: 1. Ken Mitchell, 2. Terry Taylor, 3. Ron

Colwell, 4. Don Nelson.

Masters Men's Singles: 1. John Leech, 2. Gerry Lapierre, 3. Dr. Matt Biscotti, 4. Dr. Pat Deighan.

College Men's Singles: 1. Dave Knecht, 2. Jeff Grelson, 3. Robert DeJulius, 4. Mike Hoagland.

Junior Boy's Singles: 1. Scott Brown, 2. Steve Holland, 3. Lee Vantrease, 4. Jim Kickham.

College Ladies Singles: 1. Joan Stevens, 2. Karen Savol, 3. Carolyn Miller, 4. Diane Pollack.

Open Ladies Singles: 1. Cookie Wachtel, 2. Bobbie Bricker, 3. Joan Dorkoff, 4. Kathy Cabot.

Open Ladies Doubles: 1. Bobbie Bricker-Joan Dorkoff, 2. Barbara Beal-Edith Peterson, 3. Myrna Baltzell-Joyce Dugavich, 4. Carolyn Miller-Sue Ziegler.

Impressive young players that did not make the semifinals of the open men's singles were Kevin Deighan, Dan Clifford, Art Divall and Clark Pittman who extended

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Greater Use Of Plastic Aiding Racquetballers

NOTE: This is the first in a series of articles concerning racquetball equipment. The series is designed so that the consumer may be more aware of manufacturing techniques, new trends and technical advancement.

The satisfactory development of the plastic racquet for racquetball has been welcomed by most of the sport's leading players who maintain that they can experience better "feel" and "touch" with plastic than the old wooden framed racquets.

Furthermore, the use of plastic allows for a more customized racquet, produced to greater personal specifications involving weight and flex. Manufacturers are able to control the fiber-filler ratio of the plastic to deliver the exact weight and stiffness requested for a given racquet.

By altering the fiber content of the plastic, manufacturers are able to produce racquets uniformly customized as to weight and stiffness, a process that is not practical with aluminum. And the more per-

sonalized the flex, the faster racquet speed possible.

The better "feel" and "touch" players credit to plastic partly is the consequence of a superior "dampening" effect at contact. Metal racquets vocalize the hit, where plastic is able to smother the sound thereby producing a truer reading of shot execution.

But the successful use of plastic demands the highest possible standard of manufacturing control, and there are several conditions that if not fully met result in a product whose performance is sub-standard.

As with any other material, there are degrees of quality in plastic. Not all grades of nylon and glass plastic fibers used are completely satisfactory for racquet construction and the manufacturing process also requires the adding of waxes and lubricants as well as pigments for color.

So delicate is each step and so necessary is each for the finished

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World's No. 1 Y To Add Eight Courts

Frampton Panels Chosen For New Courts; Will Include First Full Front Wall Glass

Northwest Suburban YMCA in the Chicago suburb of Des Plaines is the world's largest membership facility with approximately 24,000 members. And, by the end of this year it should also boast having the largest number of four-wall courts under one roof — 16!

Now planned are an additional eight courts that will include a radical innovation of one court with a FULL GLASS FRONT WALL. This has long been a dream of USRA President Bob Kendler, who feels that the real "agony and ecstasy of the game can only be witnessed by viewing right into the front of the players".

Chuck McClellan, general secretary of the Y, and for years an active proponent of the game, is "sold" on the Frampton Court Systems and will use their maintenance-free panels on all the new courts.

When it became necessary to refurbish one of the existing courts last year the Frampton panels were placed in the front wall and the comment now is: sound "excellent"; playability "perfect".

D.B. Frampton rebuilt this front wall, using some exclusive and unique techniques to prepare the old wall before the new surface, a Frampton F-62-SP panels, developed by D.B. Frampton & Co. and U.S. Gypsum Co. were used in this case for court repair.

After the front wall was installed sound tests that duplicated the previous tests were run. In the opinion of the sound engineers, the management of the Northwest Suburban Y, and the all-important players themselves, the results were entirely satisfactory.

Similar tests, using a rubber sling to propel handballs, racquetballs, and squash balls were performed on the courts and the tests showed that courts built with Frampton panels outperformed conventional plaster courts in almost every case.

These tests are good examples of the type of research that has gone into the perfection of Frampton court systems. The panels are fabricated from specially-formulated phenolic resins and are virtually impervious to damage under normal playing conditions. They are dimensionally stable and warp-resistant and virtually impervious to moisture. They can be applied Direct to Masonry, Furred Steel Studs, or Free Standing. The Frampton Company also offers engineering and construction assistance, and help with lighting and climate control.



D. B. FRAMPTON (l), owner of the company that has done extensive research in producing an ideal guaranteed for "life of the building" wall panel . . . with USRA President Bob Kendler.



Installation of panels were made to remedy a damaged front wall on one of the courts at the Northwest Suburban YMCA. The subsequent success of this job led to use of the panels in the additional courts.

The Name Of The Game Is P-A-T-I-E-N-C-E

Nineteen-year-old Steve Serot has learned that lesson well, and now he tells you how you can play better by putting patience in your game.

By Steve Serot

The purpose of this article is to explain why patience in racquetball is so important. In the past when I was 13-18 years old I didn't understand percentage racquetball. I had previously used pure physical power to overcome an opponent's ability, to set up and to kill the "plum" balls. I recently realized that my physical ability to hit the "photon" was not enough to win a tournament against other top players.

I would get myself into situations where I would "flail" the ball from any position on the court as hard as I could. I didn't care what position I was in nor what position my opponent was in when I hit the ball. I just

teed it up and whaled for bottom board.

Reaching the semi-finals was all I could expect from this style of play. Learning the hard way by continually collecting second, and third place trophies prompted me to learn patience and percentage racquetball.

It is my firm belief that after 10 years of experience in racquetball that patience is the key to success.

For this article I have assumed that the reader knows what a kill shot is and knows how to hit one, — the problem being you just don't know when the percentages are right for the kill. The kill shot is the ultimate offensive weapon, but it's not the only shot in the game. I used to think it was! I tried to kill every ball I could get my racquet

on. I recently learned (after 10 years of frustration) that playing a conservative ceiling ball and passing game, waiting for the percentage set-up shot, is much more effective. Hence, patience started winning for me.

Learning patience takes a lot of practice. Practice takes a lot of patience. Together they give a player confidence in his or her game. What then, should you practice to gain that confidence in your kill shot, to allow you to make the shot when the opportunity arises?

I practice the drop and kill. Stand one arms length away from either the forehand or backhand wall at the short line. Face the side wall nearest you, and drop the ball six inches ahead of your front foot. Wait for the ball to come down to below knee level and take your normal swing, aiming for the nearest front wall corner. Move back to mid-court and do the same thing, then move back to the back wall and drop and kill in the nearest front wall corner.

Next I practice the set-up and kill. In this exercise I hit the ball softly at the front wall. On the rebound I let it bounce and drop to below my knees and kill it in the nearest corner. This can be done from anywhere on the court.

For off-the-back-wall kills hit the set up shot hard enough to come off the back wall, let the ball drop below knee level ahead of the lead foot and kill it in the nearest front wall corner. Keeping your eyes on the ball is very important when executing the back wall kill. Eye contact with the ball is important on all shots.

Practice these three shots, fore and backhand at least 250-500 shots each per week and you will soon have confidence in your kill shot.

One of the by-laws of percentage racquetball is, — 95 per cent of the time shoot a set-up in the nearest corner. But if you can't kill the ball in practice, you'll never kill it in a game. Don't force your kill shot, wait for the set-up you know you can kill. That takes patience!

Patience pays off as Serot accepts check for first place in Aurora Pro-Am.



The racquetballs being used today are very fast, causing more errors and resulting in more set-ups than the old, dead balls. It's a tough ball to kill because of its liveliness. It's also easier to keep in play longer because it tends to come off the back wall more often.

Once the ball is in play, don't wait too long to attempt your kill, — if you do your opponent will kill it first. Don't be discouraged if your opponent covers one of your kill shots. More often than not, a percentage kill shot attempt on your part will keep your opponent off balance enough so he or she will not be able to make an effective re-kill. When a player is off balance it is very tough to hit a percentage shot. In other words, when you are lying on the floor, falling backwards, stepping on your feet or racquet, DON'T TRY AND KILL THE BALL!! Go for a defensive shot, i.e., ceiling ball or cross court pass.

When serving one must also be patient. The server, for the only time in a rally, has complete control over where the ball goes. There are very few aces in racquetball,

due mainly to the size and high bounce of the ball. I prefer to force my opponent to return my serve with a ceiling ball, and I do that by hitting a serve that comes to him chest high. The result is a ceiling ball rally until one comes up short, or off the back wall which is more common with the fast balls. A short ceiling ball is easier to kill than a ceiling ball that comes off the back wall. But no matter which one you go for, don't force a chest-high kill shot. If you do, it will probably hit the front wall chest high. If you don't have enough room to let the ball drop to below knee level, don't try to kill it, — go back to the ceiling until you get a better shot. This style of play will provoke the non-patient player into taking the low percentage shots, — turning the tables in your favor.

The same theories apply when receiving the serve. Patience means not trying to kill every serve. Hit the ceiling return unless the server is forced out of center court by a bad serve. In that case, shoot away!

Charlie Brumfield is called by

many the smartest player in racquetball. In his early years of playing Charlie could literally kill any ball he could see. His anticipation and quickness in setting up for the kill shot was so overwhelming that nobody could come close to beating him. In the last two years the speed of the ball has increased enough to off-set Charlie's ability to set-up so quickly and kill the ball. Consequently Charlie has now gone to a more patient style of play.

This is not to imply that Charlie changed his game only because of the speed of the ball. He had to change his style because other players caught up to him in the ability to kill the ball and to cover the kill attempts. Brumfield now plays a much more patient game, waiting for the higher percentage shot.

Throughout my career in racquetball I have gained confidence in waiting for the percentage shot. I hope this article explains clearly to players, from novice to pro, why percentage racquetball has led me to victory and will eventually win for you.

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There's Plenty of Time

— If You're A Youngster

The youngest member of the pro tour, 17-year-old Marty Hogan gives a few pointers to players of all ages on many aspects of the game. To see how he views racquetball, read on.

By Marty Hogan

Racquetball is a great game mainly because it offers great exercise in a short period of time. This article will deal, however, with that player who wants to get more out of racquetball than just exercise, — the competitive racquetballer.

In order to play competitively one has to do more than just go out and hit the ball around. Effective

shots have to be developed, ones that can be hit consistently. Through this article I hope I can help your game in some spots where it needs improvement. Each area of discussion, if a weakness in your game, can cause you to lose matches you might otherwise have won.

Conditioning

Conditioning is one good means of winning. If you are like most players, you're in the once or twice

a week play-racquetball-socially category. You count your two hours on the court as "*being in shape*." Forget it. You are not in competitive shape. Since there is a major tournament only a few weeks away, how then, do you get in good racquetball shape in a short period?

You do not have to immediately start running 10 miles a day, (if you could you'd already be in super shape.) The best source of getting into shape and doing it quickly would be wind sprints, which do much more than aid your on-the-court stamina.

Wind sprints make you quicker on the court, and build strength and stamina in your legs. But don't take this advice and go outside immediately sprinting as fast as you can. Start off slowly, — running 20 yards at a fair pace, then walking 20 yards. Gradually build up your speed and increase your yardage to 30 and then 40 yards. Don't forget to walk in between your sprints, because the stopping and starting is the thing that will help you the most when you're on the court.

I am not saying that jogging three miles a day won't get you in shape. It will. But it will take a couple of weeks before you're in good shape, and then it will not be racquetball shape. Running sprints will make you much quicker on the court as well as allowing you to last a lot longer. You'll find that sprints will allow you to reach balls you used to think were unreachable.

Your legs play a very important part in your winning a racquetball game, especially a tough one. Your legs take a beating, whether or not you are the victim of a waffle-leg or a few rainbows from where your opponent hit you with the ball. The stronger they are, the better you will be able to survive these, plus



Hogan's intense concentration, amazing for his age, zeroes in on a ceiling return.

the natural enemies of the legs, — cramps.

Sprints, jogging, weightlifting, and plain old running will keep your legs in pretty good shape. When preparing for a match do a lot of stretching exercises to loosen up your muscles and avoid pulls. Always keep your legs warm in between games, — again to help prevent leg cramps, which will be fatal to your game.

The Psyche Factor

Many people think that some of the game's top players like Charlie Brumfield, Steve Serot and Steve Keeley try to psyche out their opponents. Don't believe a thing you hear. The only thing that can psyche you out is you yourself.

Many people when going on the court against a supposedly better player ask themselves, "How am I going to beat this guy? He's got all these shots, gets everything, etc. How can I win?" Obviously, that's the wrong attitude. Instead you should think positively, like Ron Strom, for example. Strom, one of the fast-rising stars on the Seamco Pro Tour, figures it this way.

"He's human and he can be beaten like anyone else. Every player in the world has lost. He's not perfect. He had to beat better players for himself to become a better player, — and so can I."

Some of the so-called "psyches" now employed by top racquetball players include the "long eye," used primarily by Serot. It consists of Steve turning, while in the service zone and staring at his opponent with a grotesque grimace on his face.

Says Steve, "It does something to the person's thinking."

Well, if it does great. But I think it is just an immature act that has no psyche value at all.

Some players like to talk to their opponent during a match, another form of psyche. After a player hits a particularly good shot, the "psyches" will say something like, "You're the only person I've ever met who could kill consistently with a western grip." After a few more questions regarding his grip pretty soon the inexperienced player begins to wonder how he does kill so well with a western grip. And theoretically, that's when his kills stop.

Personally, I don't buy it. I think the only thing this type of antagonism does is make the opponent try that much harder to beat the "psyches."

Young players tend to lack concentration on the court, and are usually the targets of psyche jobs by veterans. Confidence cures concentration woes. If you feel you can win, you can hit your shots and are convinced of it, — that will be enough for you to do the job.

The Thinking Man's Way To Winning

For the racquetballer who wants to play competitively, thinking is the most essential factor in winning. And thinking really boils down to shot selection, — what shot to hit at the right time. This is much more than driving the ball left when your opponent is on the floor after diving to the right. It includes changing the pace of the game if necessary, and knowing what shots will lead toward more points against a particular opponent.

If you intend to play tournaments then you must realize that every opponent is different. Some will be able to kill balls from certain areas, some will not. Some will give you set-ups off the ceiling, others will not. It is very important to know the capabilities of your opponent, if possible.

If you have never seen him play before go in and test him out. Hit a lot of ceiling balls to his forehand and backhand. Drive the ball a few times, get him moving. Use a variety of serves to probe possible weak areas. The Z- and low, hard drive are my two most effective serves. Both put the pressure on my opponent and force him to prove to me he can hit a decent defensive return.

Don't get discouraged if he kills one of the shots you thought he was weak at. Keep on drilling at him. Don't give him a minute to relax. Always keep the pressure on.

I recommend that the low, hard drive be used the most. When hit correctly it is the most effective of serves. But it is the hardest to control, and takes a lot of practice to develop. But I will guarantee that once you have learned to hit it with some consistency it will bring you more points than any other serve.

Strategy For the Younger Player

Most young players, to be frank, have no strategy or game plan. When they become involved in a tough match, they really are unaware of what is going on. They run their guts out for no reason. They work twice as hard as they have to.

Young players tend to think about missing that last shot, or the lousy call by the referee, instead of what is really going on in the match. They are not able to see the overview of the game to realize the overall strategy that is necessary to consistently win.

So you get a plum set-up and you skip it in. Instead of throwing a temper tantrum right there you must try and forget it. Sure it's tough, especially for the young player, but if every player could make the shot every time, there would be no competition in the sport.

Another factor that could disrupt a young player during a tournament is the crowd. There is nothing like the home-crowd advantage in racquetball as well as other sports. But when you go out of town don't expect too many hands clapping for you. You should always be concentrating on your game, however, and not the crowd.

Well, there you have it. The way I train and think when I am on the court. I hope that you got something out of what you read. To the best of my knowledge this is the way I look at racquetball. I think that racquetball will grow to be one of the biggest indoor sports within time. It is progressing so fast it should not be long. And as for me, I'll see you there.

Position Wanted

George Rudysz, 11 East Lawlor St. New Britain, Ct. 06051. Vitrally interested in court club management. Willing to relocate anywhere in the U.S. College graduate, experienced in retail management. Racquetball pro. and former National Champion. Age 24. Health-excellent. If you seek enthusiasm, willingness to work and ability to deal with and work with people, please write.

Rapid Growth of Racquetball Should Lead To Rule Changes

It's about time administrators, spectators, players and tournament officials take a realistic view of racquetball, where it is and where it's going. With this in mind, most of you will realize that we may soon be too big for ourselves to handle.

By Chuck Leve

The evolution of racquetball during the past seven years has been a growing up process, as this infant of a sport struggles mightily to stand upright on its own two feet. We have all witnessed this near-miracle and many of us are fortunate and proud to have had some bearing on the direction that our sport has taken.

The adoption of a standardized set of rules aided the transition from many splinter groups in 1968 to a cohesive racquetball promotional effort that now exists. These rules were taken virtually verbatim from the handball rules to make the court sports that much easier to identify.

It wasn't until last year that any major rule changes were adopted, including the creation of the seniors bracket, change from two to five minutes rest between the first and second games, and use of the technical foul.

And although these rule changes have helped the game in small areas, they have really done nothing to help the game's major problem, handling the fantastically rapid growth of racquetball.

With so many new players entering the racquetball world on a daily basis, new records being set in almost every tournament around the country, one of the biggest headaches in racquetball is court overuse, especially during a tournament. When 236 participants show up for a weekend state tournament as did recently in Illinois (128 in the B singles category alone) it is time to do something to help alleviate this problem.

Therefore the following rule changes are being offered for dis-

cussion and feedback, for everyday play and primarily for tournament competition.

In addition, a few other minor rules need change or elimination, rules that serve no real purpose and actually only cause confusion and occasionally heated court arguments.

So Long Second Serve

Can anybody give me one good reason for allowing two serves in racquetball? Its reason for existence in handball is the great difficulty in striking the ball with your hand to make it extend over the short line, especially for beginners, and also the small margin of error with which a handball player has to work.

In a top handball match you will witness a great number of aces, one aspect of the game that is both skillful and exciting. The big hop serve into the side wall crack is a thing of beauty that takes years to master. But there are very, very few aces in racquetball, — top players average less than one per match against each other. And there is no hop on the serve in our game.

Unlike handball, it is tremendously easy to serve the ball over the short line in racquetball. The margin of error with a bigger ball and bigger hitting surface makes for far fewer mis-hit serves.

Why keep the rule? I can find no real reason to advocate allowing two serves. I can, however, find abundant reasons to eliminate the second chance.

Initially, and obviously, it will eliminate the "fatigue long serve" or "fatigue short serve." These two gimmicks were first seen in racquetball when performed by the wily Charlie Brumfield. After ex-

pending his limited amount of natural energy, Brumfield found himself completely exhausted during a tough tournament match a few years ago. The next time he gained the serve he purposely hit the ball high up the front wall to make it carry to the back wall on a fly. By then allowing the ball to rebound off the back wall, all the way up to the front wall and leisurely strolling after it, Brumfield was able to catch his breath. Done enough times this tactic has three results, — 1) it enables the player, Brumfield in this case, to regain his wind, — 2) it can unnerve his opponent and, — 3) it unfairly puts the better conditioned athlete at a disadvantage.

At first it is exciting and usually draws a murmur from the crowd, which generally does not approve of the strategy, but marvels at the quick thinking of that player utilizing it. However as it draws on, this tactic tends to become a drawn out exercise in boredom. And even Brumfield admits it.

After defeating Steve Serot by using the long serves in a 1973 pro tourney, Brumfield approached this writer and apologized for his strategy.

"I'm sorry I had to slow the game down," said Charlie. **"I know the fans didn't like it. But it was all I could do if I was going to win."**

How do we eliminate this problem? And it is a problem. Imagine the ridicule to which our sport would be subject if on national television, Brumfield or any player was to go through such shenanigans. It would be a shame that the great skills, potential and hard work that have gone into the past few years to reach such a pinnacle,

were thrown to the wind because of fatigue long serves.

There are no good reasons to keep the second serve. There are substantial reasons for its elimination. I think we should eliminate it.

We'll never close all the loopholes that enable players to take advantage of the rules and thereby take advantage of the game. But the more we close, the better off racquetball will be.

My Winner, My Point

Okay, you took the above proposed change with a grain of salt, saw the light, decided it didn't really affect the game that much, and finally agreed to it. After all, you can serve the ball over the short line, so who can't? As long as any of these rule changes don't really disrupt racquetball as we know it, right? Wrong.

I want to change the method of scoring in racquetball. If I hit a kill shot, I want the point. All the time, everytime, no matter who served at the beginning of the rally. If my opponent hits a beautiful v-pass or any other winner, he deserves the point, no matter if I served or he did.

Can you name any other individual sport other than handball or paddleball where a player can hit the ultimate winning shot and not even dent the scoreboard? Not tennis, not platform tennis, not jai alai. What then?

I propose that a point be scored on every rally. Such a rule change, although radical, would greatly enhance the game for a number of reasons.

First, it would speed up play. Tournaments would be run faster and more efficiently and pave the way for more entries which could be handled far more easily.

Secondly, your daily workout would allow you to finish a two out of three match, or even a three of five, instead of barely making it through two games, or having that substantial lead in the third, only to have your hour's time prohibit you from that victory.

Thirdly, it would place more of an emphasis on shotmaking, and less on conditioning. Although during a long tournament conditioning would still be important, players would, under the new rule, be able to survive two matches in a day.

Fourth, it would be far better for the upper age categories, masters and golden masters, where extended play now can become a health hazard especially to new players, or unconditioned players.

For the purists who demand longer tests of skill, the quarter-final rounds on in major tournaments could be three out of five matches, scoring on every point, with the early rounds and consolation rounds two of three.

Scoring on every point would eliminate two and a-half or three hour marathon matches, and make doubles a far more interesting contest. Each rally would be pressure packed for both players or sides. Match point would be for either player at 20-20, not just the server.

Players concentration would increase, due to the new scoring method. Players who become aggressive on their serve, now will be aggressive on every rally, knowing that it will result in another tally going up on one side of the board or the other.

Games and matches will become faster, quicker, and more enjoyable for players and spectators alike. Consolation rounds, now a burden for tournament directors, will fall easily into a tourney schedule. Players will not have to miss one and usually two days of work because of the extended length of today's tournaments.

Sure it needs some testing, and it will be tested. I suggest that you, Mr. Racquetball, give it a try at your own club, and let us know the results. I think it's a great idea, but of course, I'm proposing it.

Bounce, Bounce, Bounce, - and Bounce

What can be more ridiculous

Remember that address:

NATIONAL RACQUETBALL,

4101 Dempster St.,

Skokie, IL 60076.

Where the great pros are!

than the antiquated three bounce rule? This rule to my mind has never made sense, never will make sense and besides that, is never enforced. Its advocates, if there are any, will say that it helps to speed up play. Hogwash! The 10 second rule, which applies to both server and receiver is all that is necessary to keep play moving.

All referees have the authority and most have the ability to detect a "quick serve" in racquetball. Any receiver can request and is entitled to his full 10 seconds to ready himself for the serve, so there are very few, if any quick service aces in racquetball.

So why the three bounce rule? Are we saving wear and tear on the floors of our courts? Are we going to deprive servers across the nation their only chance to exercise their opposite hand? So let him bounce the ball a few extra times. Big deal.

If the referee decides that a player did, in fact, commit a "quick serve," he simply orders the serve over.

For those players becoming uptight by this proposed change, we could accompany the change with an insertion that the server must declare his intention to serve. For example if I were serving to you I would turn and say, "Service," or "Serve" or "Here it comes, baby." You as receiver would then know that the serve was soon to come.

Or maybe just a nod of the head, or acknowledgement with a tip of the racquet. But please, spare me the burden as referee of calling "side out" on match point due to four bounces. (I wouldn't call it anyway).

You've got 10 seconds to serve. Dribble to your heart's content. Tell me why not.

Develop Your Off Hand

One of the unfortunate aspects of racquetball and one of my reasons advocating the elimination of the three bounce rule is that racquetball is a one handed (or armed) game. Another rule which prohibits players from developing their off hand is that rule which makes it illegal to throw the ball against the side wall prior to serving.

Swinging Both Ways Gives The Add to Racquetball

Tennis-Racquetballer Steve Levenson compares the pluses and minuses of playing both tennis and racquetball, and "surprise!", our game looks pretty good.

"Keep your eye on the ball!"
"Get your racket back! — Further!"
"No, not that far"
"Bend!"
"At the knees, not at the waist!"
"Follow through"
"Further!"
"Turn side ways"
"Stay down!"
"Lean into the ball"
"Further!"
"Have you always had a continental grip?"

... No Mrs. Smith, the continental grip is not a disease!"

Teaching tennis can be a very difficult occupation, but learning tennis is even harder. During an hourly lesson, a pro can confuse you with over one hundred different rules on how to correctly hit a tennis ball. By the end of the hour, you are often sufficiently discomfited so that not only are your nerves tied in a knot, but you are also so frustrated that you are ready to take up golf. So you take up golf and after the first lesson the golf pro suggests you give tennis a try. Where do you go from here? If you are like hundreds of thousands of other Americans you've turned to racquetball.

Racquetball is experiencing its rapid growth because people have realized that while their friends are being frustrated on the tennis court they can be enjoying the fun and competition of racquetball. Why is it that the beginning racquetball players can immediately enjoy the game, while the beginning tennis player must often endure months of lessons and frustration?

There is no question that the beginning racquetball player has several advantages over the new tennis player. A racquetball court is enclosed, therefore, misdirected shots hit the side walls and come back to the center of the court. In tennis, those same shots go onto an adjacent court and you have to wait with a feeling of shame and embarrassment until the ball is returned to you.

A miss-hit ball in tennis might go over the fence, but that same "error" could be an excellent ceiling shot in racquetball. Once the ball gets by you in tennis, you must walk over and pick it up, while in

racquetball, you run back, wait, and you are ready to continue the rally with a shot off the back wall.

Most people have good eye-hand coordination, although sometimes they do not have confidence in it. Racquetball helps give you confidence because coordination is easier when the racquet head is nearer to your hand. Tennis players must swing with a racquet head which is over two feet from their hands. This is a much more difficult operation.

The new plastic, metal and carbon racquetball racquets aid coordination because they are light weight and easy to maneuver. This



Levenson poses with his unusual equipment, big racquet and little. Steve is currently involved in a new court club venture in suburban Chicago, where he'll manage and teach.

is an added benefit for women and children who find the lighter weight racquet easier to control. Once control of the racquet is achieved, control of the ball is not far away.

Racquetball players have the additional advantage of having a smaller court than tennis. The smaller court means that there is less area you have to cover and that fewer balls can be hit out of your reach. This adds up to longer rallies, more practice and, therefore, faster improvement.

Even though the racquetball court is smaller and the distances you run are not as great as in tennis it does not result in less exercise. In fact, racquetball players generally enjoy a much more vigorous work out than their tennis counterparts. Because in racquetball, there is no such thing as a wide or long return, and because you can return balls off the ceiling and back wall, points

often last a long time and you are kept in constant motion.

On the other hand, the beginning tennis player can play an hour of tennis without working up a sweat. Tennis balls are hit into the net, hit onto neighboring courts and often hit over the fence. The tennis player finds himself spending more time picking balls up than hitting them.

To be great in any sport requires a lot of practice, good coaching, and more practice. Racquetball is no exception. But while in some sports, it takes years to reach even a modest level of proficiency, in racquetball you can enjoy a feeling of success almost immediately. And there is nothing like the feeling of success to breed real success.

Improvement comes very rapidly in racquetball. The rules and scoring of the game are easy to learn. No complicated serve need be learned. These things allow for im-

mediate competition which adds a new dimension to the game and makes it more fun and exciting from the very beginning. Just as success breeds success, competition also breeds success. Competition helps bring you to an even higher level of proficiency more quickly.

As a tennis pro, I'd like to make it clear that I am not advocating throwing away your tennis racquet and taking up racquetball. Both games are extremely rewarding. However, I am advocating that people give both games a try. John Hart, one of the top racquetball players in Illinois, is also a serious tennis player. John feels that racquetball has helped his quickness in tennis, and that his tennis has helped his foot work and control in racquetball. You too many find that tennis and racquetball compliment one another. So why not try swinging both ways?

Way To Stay Loose

From page 36

perform. Unfortunately, most athletes do not realize that the loosening of the muscles of the low back is one of the major keys to flexibility.

The spine, being surrounded by a tiny interlocking muscle system, is the core of the body's rotation. It must be properly loosened up. The large lumbar and sacral vertebral muscles, tightening imperceptibly with each stride, are the first to feel the effects of the constant pounding of running. It is imperative that these muscles, in order to insure proper rotation of the pelvis and consequent maintenance of stride during the longer races, be stretched mildly.

I realize that there are skeptics who insist that they just are not

flexible, and no matter how much stretching they do there is no improvement. But I maintain that no one is too tight or muscular to improve if the program is carried out with patience and dedication — barring some physical limitation of the joints.

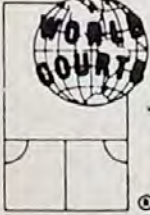
The following program of exercises is designed to stretch the paravertebral muscles of the spine from the neck to the pelvis. Also included are muscle stretching exercises for the hips, knees and calves. They should be performed prior to and after each workout. The exercises may be difficult initially — even for a month or more — due to neglect over the years. It is also possible that the exercises, done improperly, may be harmful for people who have had a history of low-back pain or prior surgery.

Ohio State Tournament

From page 40

Robbie Abrams to three tough games. The ladies played many excellent close matches, drawing large galleries.

The tournament committee did an excellent job of promoting and running the tournament. The hospitality was great with gatorade and food for all. The banquet on Saturday night was especially nice featuring a sit down dinner. Prizes donated were gym bags, gloves and racquets. I think some thought the drawing was rigged when Carolyn Miller drew her doubles partners name and Clark Pittman after winning a racquet drew his brother Kim's number for another racquet. Ron Krasnicki, always a lady's man, won the next racquet and promptly donated it to be redrawn for one of the lady racquetballers to win. I am sure the young lady was thrilled with her prize. Special awards were given to Reed Gunselman for all the work he has done to promote racquetball in Ohio, and to Jim Rodriguez and Cleveland State University in appreciation of the University's help in running the tournament.



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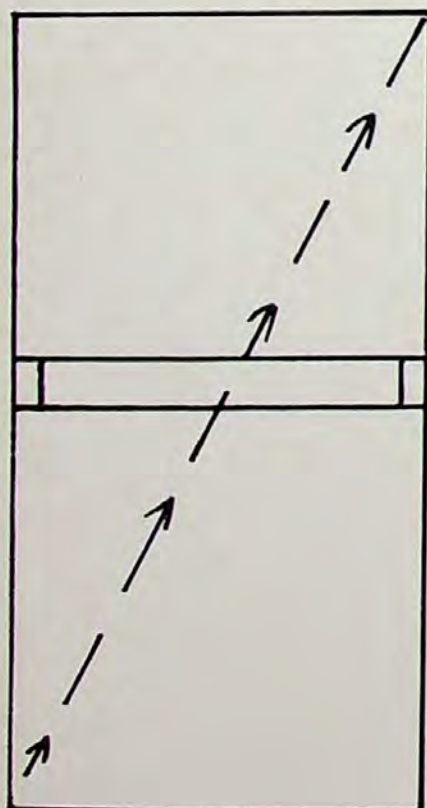
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Keeley's Thesaurus Strikes Again

More words, phrases, shots and anecdotes about racquetball by this veterinarian, top racquetball pro, and instructor.

By Steve Keeley

Hypotenuse shot — Get out and dust off your high school geometry books to comprehend this one. Mathematically speaking, the hypotenuse is the (longest) side of a right-angled triangle which is opposite the right angle. Don't worry about fathoming this because I never understood the new



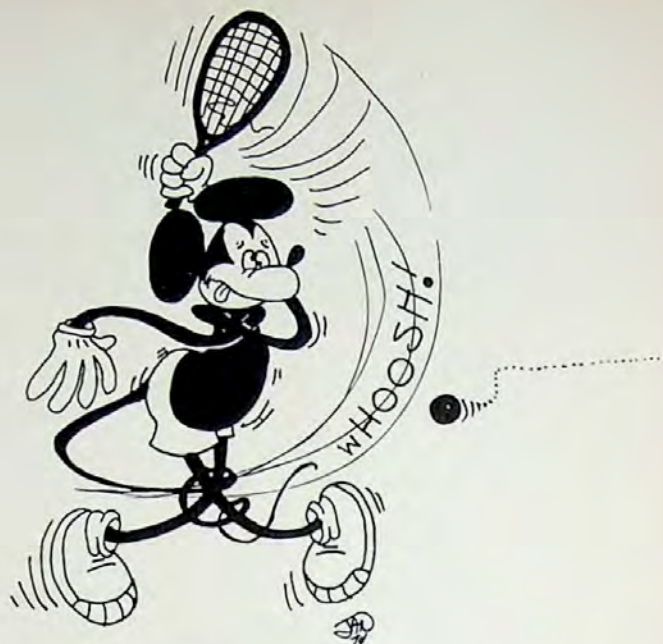
HYPOTENUSE SHOT

math either. In racquetball lingo this is the longest straight-on kill shot possible.

The ball, in trucking from its point of contact with the racquet (left rear corner) to its point of contact with the front wall (right front corner), travels a distance of 44.74 feet. (Left side wall squared plus front wall width squared equals square of hypotenuse, i.e., the square root of $40' \times 40' + 20' \times 20' = 44.74'$.) At this point one might reread the foregoing paragraph and refer to the diagram for a more complete understanding of this fascinating problem.

To be properly performed the hypotenuse shot should be struck with the forehand (do not ask me why). As can be imagined this involves backing one's body into the left rear corner before flailing with the forehand. (For those with a tremendous deal of imagination it is entirely feasible to hit an hypotenuse butt butt shot.) Backing oneself flat against the side wall in the left rear court in order to get the necessary room to swing with the forehand has given rise to the "extended hypotenuse shot."

Extended hypotenuse shot — The following is to be purused by M.I.T. math majors only. Reread and perform the hypotenuse shot three times. Now you are probably prepared for this corollary of it. The extended hypotenuse shot can be put into effect only on a court such



Mickey Mouse theory

as the one I play on in San Diego, where the court entrance is a door in the side wall in the left rear corner.

To execute: 1) Ball hit by opponent sets up in left rear court. 2) Flatten back against side wall in order to stroke with forehand, and find there is not satisfactory room to swing. 3) Quickly open door in side of court. 4) Now back two steps outside court and hit ball in proper forehand fashion. 5) Ball travels along the hypotenuse to roll off for a winner in the right front corner.

Paralysis via analysis — Synonym: the choke due to over-examination of a situation. I have sometimes been accused of being a proponent of the nonthinking theory of racquetball. That is, an experienced player is capable of executing any normal shot successfully ten out of ten times. It is only when that player begins to ask himself, **why** is his shot being successfully executed that he will subsequently choke and blow it. Therefore avoid overthinking.

Gimmicks can be utilized to avoid paralysis via analysis. Whenever I get a routine plum ball set up in a match I sometimes bounce around on my toes in setting to kill the ball. This exaggerated movement serves to prevent my mind from having a chance to interfere with my normal execution.

Plastic Racquets Helping To Improve Play

From page 40

product that only a manufacturer committed to step-by-step on-the-spot supervision can be completely successful. Some pigments, for instance, are not compatible with nylon plastic fibers in higher temperatures, others hold their color but inhibit the performance of the plastic. Still another danger is that pigments may not be fully dried prior to insertion, thus creating an unacceptable percentage of moisture that might seriously weaken the racquet structure.

A manufacturer must have control of each procedure.

"There is no way I could make a plastic racquet for commercial purposes, job out even one procedure and stay in business," said Bud Leach, president of Leach Industries which makes a plastic racquet from start to finish. Leach

also produces aluminum racquets, the only manufacturer to make both.

"I couldn't trust another company to do the necessary testing all the way through. I'd have to be responsible for someone else's performance and I still have the reputation of my company to live up to," said Leach whose plastic racquets last year had less than a one percent breakage factor.

"It stands to reason that to what extent a company controls the production process of the product the better it controls the quality of the product."

Leach said that he orders a dozen main quality checks during the assembly of a plastic racquet before it is approved to be finished. Three quality checks are made on just the pigments used. And numerous other tests are made

prior to shipping.

"It took us three years of experience with the placement of plastic fibers throughout the racquet's frame before we successfully avoided a point of stress," Leach said. **"Now as an added backup we also stress-relieve our plastic racquets by boiling them in oil. This process releases all stresses in the racquet and allows the racquet to perform evenly and without mishap."**

"I consider the plastic racquet to be the finest of all racquets but ONLY if manufactured properly. At point of purchase, the customer can not make this distinction. So he must rely on experience from the field and the reputation of performance of the manufacturer."

Keeley's Thesaurus Strikes Again

The **"Mickey Mouse theory"** is another scheme I use which is recommended for fellow simple minds. This theory involves repeating the word "Mickey Mouse" over and over again in one's mind as you are carrying out perhaps a serve or a backwall kill shot. The silent repetition of this mantra blanks the mind to all external stimuli and to internally originating (and hampering) thoughts. Other key words besides "Mickey Mouse" may be utilized; this just happened to pop into this writer's mind one day. **Note:** I do not advocate that beginners or novices of the game make use of these gimmicks. Self analysis is an important means of improvement for such an inexperienced individual.

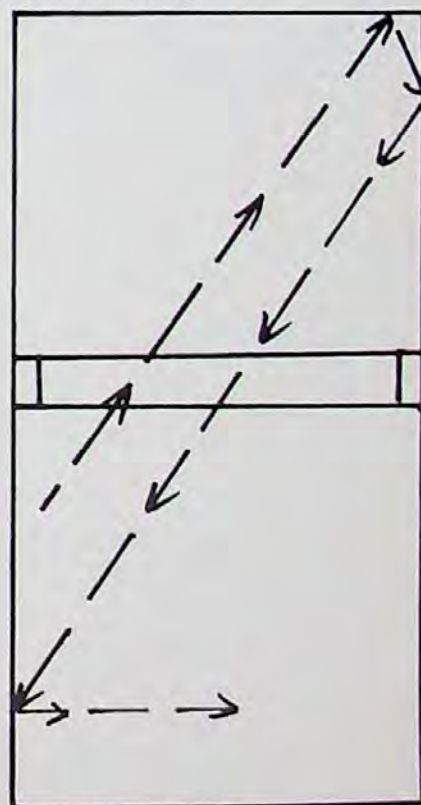
Redneck — A noun applying to one who "chokes." That is, a player who falters mentally in the performance of a normally routine shot in a crucial situation. i.e., to feel the strain and stress. To psych out. To go into the tank. To swallow the big apple (or to feel the apple rising in the throat). To combat the choke one must be of genetically stoic

character (rare) or employ the mickey mouse theory.

Windshield wiper play — This phrase aptly illustrates what occurs in some volleys during the course of any given game. Johnny Runwell dives for ball on the left side of the court and recovers just in time to return a ball on the right. Then he races left again to return a backhand V ball, followed by a scurry to the forehand side and . . . and so on back and forth, left to right to left like a windshield wiper vainly pursuing raindrops on a truck windshield.

Z ball — Like the V ball, the "Z" is named after the path which the ball travels after being struck. It is basically a defensive shot designed to strike the front wall first (about 2-4 feet down from the ceiling and 2-4 feet in from the side wall) with a certain degree of angle and force. The ball then rebounds off the side wall, travels diagonally cross-court (without hitting the floor) and strikes the opposite side wall. Due to spin imparted to the ball during the previous encounters with walls, the ball rebounds off this final side wall at an angle parallel to

and close to the back wall. It is easier illustrated than said; easier said than done.



Z-BALL

Rule Changes

From page 47

For the same reasons as above, I feel that this rule should also be done away with. As long as the server must wait for the receiver to be ready (Rule 4.1e), who cares if he throws the ball against the wall?

This is another case of a rule having no meaning, and no effect on the game. All it does is take up space in rule books and put another burden on the referee to make a call he hates to make, and usually won't. When was the last time you saw a player penalized for throwing the ball against the side wall before the receiver was ready? It doesn't happen.

I do advocate that when a player bounces the ball off the side wall, he must come to a set or ready position before serving. In other words, no momentum should be allowed to result from throwing the ball off the side wall. That ball must be caught and served in the normal manner.

What Do You Think?

Dear Sirs:

The following is my opinion on your proposed rule changes.

Eliminate second serve	() agree () disagree
Score on every rally	() agree () disagree
Allow more than 3 bounces	() agree () disagree
Allow throwing against side wall	() agree () disagree

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

If you wish to elaborate on your opinion, please attach additional sheets of paper. Send all opinions to: Letters-to-the-Editor, *National Racquetball*, 4101 Dempster Street, Skokie, IL 60076.

At least it will give your off hand something to do between rallies.

What Do You Think?

I suggest you try the above proposed changes. See if it doesn't make your racquetball a little more enjoyable. After you've tried them a few times, let us know how you

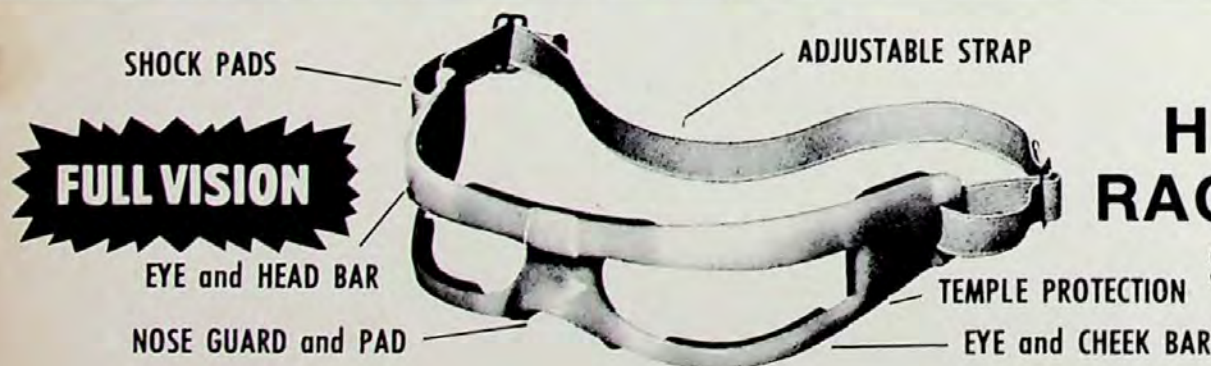
feel. Drop us a line to the Letters-to-the-Editor department of **National Racquetball**. We'd like to know how you feel about these things.

And if next year's rule book has a few of these additions or deletions, don't say we didn't warn you.

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MIKE O'CALLAGHAN
GOVERNOR

THE STATE OF NEVADA
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Greetings:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the U.S. National Racquetball Championship, held for the first time in Nevada.

Since racquetball has been rated the fastest growing indoor sport in North America, it gives me particular pleasure to note that part of the tournament will be held at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

This championship will be the highest prized tournament in the history of racquetball. Certainly anyone who participates in this tournament has already proven himself a noted athlete.

To all the contestants, I send my warmest wishes for the best of luck.

Sincerely,



Mike O'Callaghan
Mike O'Callaghan
Governor of Nevada

Seamco's Sponsorship Blesses Racquetball

The United States Racquetball Association (U.S.R.A.) and its professional arm the National Racquetball Club (N.R.C.) proudly announce the sponsorship of the N.R.C. pro-am racquetball tour by the Seamco Sporting Goods Company of New Haven, Connecticut.

The N.R.C. tour, now in its second season, has long sought a sponsor to donate the prize money necessary to maintain the promotion of racquetball, the fastest growing indoor sport in North America. And Seamco has done just that, — to the tune of \$25,000 for the remainder of the 1975 winter season.

The \$25,000 has been distributed to the last three N.R.C. events of the season, the February 6-9 Michigan Open in Lansing; the March 6-9 Milwaukee Open; the U.S. National Championships April 20-25 in Las Vegas. The Las Vegas tournament thus becomes the highest prized tournament in the history of racquetball.

"We are pleased indeed, with the generosity and promotional aid that Seamco will be giving us," said U.S.R.A. president Robert W. Kendler. **"Seamco has been behind our association from the beginning and we feel that this added push will give our sport a tremendous boost."**

The pro racquetball tour takes in one professional event per month from September through April and has visited such metropolitan areas this year as San Diego, Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco and Vancouver.

The sport of racquetball has been alive in organized form only since 1968 when Kendler put together his governing body. Since

then it has grown at a faster pace than tennis, golf or bowling in the infant stages of those sports.

Seamco, the world's largest manufacturer of racquetball equipment, has been aligned with Kendler's promotional efforts since 1968.

"We feel that the U.S.R.A. is the place to put our promotional dollars," said Seamco Executive Vice President Don Strong. **"Bob Kendler and the staff he has cultivated are doing an outstanding job riding herd on this erupting sport, and we are pleased to be a part of their program."**

The tour officially became the Seamco Pro-Am Racquetball Tour in February and all parties agree the first order of business is to attract television coverage for the National Championships.

The five handball/racquetball courts at the host Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas have been remodeled to allow t.v. coverage through a full glass back wall and glass window in the front wall of the championship court. The five courts there and eight additional courts at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas will be utilized to accommodate the overflow crowds that are anticipated.

"Never before have we been so deluged with entries, ticket sales and room reservations as we are this year," said Kendler. **"The fact that this is the first national tournament ever held in Las Vegas certainly has a great deal to do with it."**

The expected participants and fans should exceed 1,000 for the five day racquetball stay, at the end of which 12 National Champions in



DON STRONG

different age categories and sexes will be crowned.

The great boom in the sport, the championship court, the lure of Las Vegas and the Seamco sponsorship all add up to the national interest capable of spurring national coverage. At least that's the opinion of both Seamco and the U.S.R.A.

"Racquetball is as exciting an individual sport as there is," said Kendler. **"It requires speed, stamina, agility and brains. The action is fast paced and the one-on-one drama puts an electric atmosphere into the crowd. You just can't beat it."**

That's the way Seamco and the U.S.R.A. feel. And they'd love millions of television viewers to have a chance to determine if they speak the truth.

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Don Strong is one of, if not the greatest friend of racquetball in this country. Through his efforts, Seamco's sponsorship of the professional tour, without strings, has been the biggest boost to our growing sport in its short history.

The door is now opened for national attention to be drawn to racquetball. National attention, we feel, that is well deserved.



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And now, on with the Nationals. Good luck to you all!



Bob Kendler
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We are indeed honored to serve as host city for this prestigious and fast growing indoor sport championship. Your presence brings added prestige and stature to our community, and further recognition of Las Vegas as a world's leading site of major sports events.

To all contestants, may your displays of skill and stamina on the courts be exceeded only by the satisfaction of having done your best, and in the knowledge that you have contributed greatly to the sport of racquetball.

You have my personal best wishes for a most successful championship contest, and for a most pleasurable visit with us.



Sincerely,

Oran K. Gragson
Oran K. Gragson, Mayor

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Who Will Take The Number One Spot In Vegas?

By Chuck Leve

Who's going to take home the big bundle in Las Vegas? As the National Championships close in on us, and for the many of you here in Las Vegas reading these words, the following is the "line" on the pro singles championship.

Factors accounted for include tournament results for this season, past performances in National tournaments, and general knowledge on how well a particular player is playing at this time.

Much depends, of course, on the draw since many players play better against different players, due to similarities or differences in their style.

Unlike past years, there is no single outstanding player at the top of the heap to call the favorite. In the past three years that position went to Charlie Brumfield, San Diego's sometimes goateed, sometimes bearded, racquet manufacturer-lawyer. But Charlie lost out last year and has not regained the touch that put him head and shoulders above the others for two consecutive years.

Bill Schmidke, the defending amateur champ, now gives his game a shot in the pro bracket and must be considered dangerous. A rapidly maturing Steve Serot has to be right up there, as do Steve Keeley and Steve Strandemo.

Any one of the above five players could take the title. So it comes down to who will be playing the best, most consistent racquetball during the April 20-25 week. Here's the way I see it.

*Charles Brumfield, 3-1
San Diego*

The slight edge has to go to Brumfield, based solely on tournament experience and clutch performances. Brumfield still has the game to reach the top, and along with a driving desire to re-establish himself as the game's number one player I rank him the best shot at the title.

Brumfield's past credentials are as impressive as any. Back-to-back national amateur titles in 1972 and 1973, along with a long list of doubles, invitational and other awards over the years rate Charlie as one of the men to beat.

His pro performances over the past two years have been up and down but with a consistency of semi-final performances. As often happens in sport, when a man reaches the top like Brumfield did in '72 and '73, the rest of the world strives for one thing, — to dethrone him.

Brumfield has lost the aura of invincibility that used to surround him. But he still has his fantastic control game and psychological ability to win any match at any time.

In order to win this one Charlie will have to shoot the ball better than he has this year. The other players have a "book" on his control tactics, have anticipated them and have defeated Charlie from time-to-time because of it.

Charlie must be bolder, must gamble occasionally, and show a more aggressive selection of shots. Four years ago Brumfield

was known as a shooter. He must reach back into that era of near-detherthal racquetball, take out a few kills from those long gone days, and put them to use in court number five at the Tropicana.

Brumfield, then, the slight favorite, going off at 3-1.

*Steve Serot, 4-1
San Diego*

Just turned 19-year-old, lefty Serot is perhaps the most publicized of all racquetballers. His booming game and boisterous court antics have both endeared him to and turned off fans and foes alike.



CHARLIE BRUMFIELD



STEVE SEROT

Serot can win the Las Vegas tournament. If he is on his game he could do it easily. But there are so many good players and the circumstances so complex, that we can't count on a runaway by anyone.

Still too young to put five or six consistent rounds together, Serot should have to go three games once at least and most likely twice to reach the finals. He has played well this year, with many impressive pro wins, including his first-ever over Charlie Brumfield in Dallas in February.

But he has also faltered at times, including losses to Brumfield, Steve Strandemo and Keeley. The fact is that Serot has not yet become the dominant factor in racquetball as expected by many people. Perhaps his time is not quite here, for he possesses all the mechanical skills.

Mentally, however, he still needs maturity. His games suffer from a tendency to overhit, i.e., hit the ball too hard, and inability to control his emotions on the court. When young Steve overcomes these two nagging problems, he should find himself unbeatable.

The closest Serot has come to a national singles title was a runnerup position last year in the amateur nationals, losing to Schmidtke in three games. Although he has won some pro tournaments this year, Steve has yet to

win the big one, a hurdle not to be underestimated. Once over that hurdle, Steve Serot will not have to ever look back. Serot, the second choice, at 4-1.

Steve Keeley, 4-1 San Diego

Another 4-1 shot for the pro singles title has to be Steve Keeley, the curly-haired blond veterinarian. His game has been a gradual evolution from pure shooter to control, an evolution that has occasionally been a hindrance rather than aid to his racquetball exploits.

Why is it that top racquetballers start as kill shot artists, lose occasionally due to an off night, and become disenchanted with that style of play, moving then to more control, less shooting? I have never seen a top player make this transition without losing his kill shot touch.

That is the case with Keeley. His shot selection has not exuded confidence in his kill ability, especially with his forehand. Not that he can't kill the ball, — any top player or spectator to his numerous wins will claim he's one of the all-time great shooters, — but having convinced himself that control is the way to go, he has quit shooting those low percentage shots that can often turn matches around.

So now when he does try one, he can't execute, therefore leading to less shooting. As Keeley begins to re-gain confidence in his kills, he will again be able to put the ball dead in the corners.

Until then he relies on his great conditioning, protein diet, and physical strength. Playing control means keeping the ball in play longer, necessitating superior conditioning, especially in big tournaments with tough matches from the round of 16 on up. It's the hard way to do it, but must be done if you're a control player.

For "Harpo" to win the pro title in Las Vegas he must be able to shoot from deep court, to take advantage of the opportunities he'll get. Against the other top players these opportunities will not be that plentiful, and Steve Keeley had better utilize every one.

Steve Strandemo, 5-1 San Diego

Steve Strandemo is an intelligent



STEVE KEELEY

person and an extremely intelligent racquetball player. While all the other players were shooting first and learning control and conditioning second, Steve was doing it the other way around. A conditioning fanatic, Strandemo once was known as the "roadrunner," because he never killed the ball, always kept it in play. This allowed his speed and conditioning to outlast opponents, either by fatigue, or its brother, leg cramps.

Having gone as far as he could (top eight) with control and conditioning, Strandemo has concentrated on his kills of late, and it has brought him some impressive victories. You can't lose control by learning to hit kill shots, but you can lose kill shots by going for control.

The recently hot-shooting Strandemo has been deadly in both corners, forehand and backhand. It was said almost a year ago that if Strandemo ever learned to kill the ball he would be almost unstoppable. Well, he has learned the kills and he is going to be very tough to beat in Vegas.

Steve's career began in St. Cloud, Minnesota where he was a full time school teacher and part time racquetball player. When he found out the National Racquetball Club was initiating a pro tour in 1973, he quit his teaching job to concentrate on the little green ball.

Out to San Diego he went, learning from the masters of the game,



STEVE STRANDEMO

and in less than a year's time he has been solid top eight and most recently, a consistent top four.

Few players compete with the intensity of Steve Strandemo. Although known somewhat for his close style of play, it is a natural offshoot of this intensity. If he can crowd less and shoot more, Steve rates even better than the listed 5-1.

Bill Schmidtke, 7-1 Minneapolis

For a medium range long shot, it's got to be Bill Schmidtke. Bill seems to be able to put his best game on the line once a year, for the national championship. His stunning victory a year ago, and equally stunning win in 1971 makes every player watch him with a wary eye.

Frankly, I don't think Bill can do it again. At 32-years-old the grind of the play and pressure has got to tell on him. He shouldn't be diving around the court with 18 and 19-year-old kids, but he does, and each time he hits the hardwood it takes a little more out of him.

Bill's game just doesn't lend itself to winning Las Vegas. His best serve is a low hard drive, just the kind of serve that drains the energy from his powerful right arm. He is a shooter, a gambler, and to gamble in Las Vegas he'll need a super hot



BILL SCHMIDTKE (above) and RON RUBENSTEIN (below)

streak.

Schmidtke's backhand never has been a picture of beauty. Only adequate, he still has the ability to take about 90 per cent of his shots with his forehand, and with the remaining 10 per cent backhand he never seems to get hurt.

So why is Schmidtke even a 7-1 choice? Because he can never be counted out. His forehand is the most deadly in the game. If he is allowed to gather momentum, and the big draw should work to his advantage in this respect, he could be unstoppable.

Schmidtke cannot be psyched. He is a pressure player, with plenty of guts. Always loose and relaxed on the court, he is known for playing his best ball with his back to the wall, as in 1971 when he won the finals 21-14 after being down 14-3 in the third game.

Schmidtke won't choke, he won't give you an inch, and he'll play his heart out. But can he last?

Ron Rubenstein, 10-1 Chicago

Racquetball came along 10 years too late for Ron Rubenstein. The likeable, easy-going Chicagoan and five time Illinois State champ will not win in Las Vegas and the main reason is age. Ruby will be 36 years-old on April 25, the day of the finals in Vegas.

"It sure would be a nice birthday present," said his wife Ellen, **"for Ron to be in the finals that day."**

Nice it would be, but highly unlikely. Thirty-six year old legs just can't go three games anymore, not against 18 and 19-year-old legs. In a way it's a shame, for it seems that a player with Rubenstein's ability and character should have had a real shot at the big one in his prime.

Not that Rubenstein can't upset a few. His game is still one of the best. He's lost to Strandemo in three and Serot and Keeley by a total of seven points in four games, for his only losses this season. And the tourney schedule, which will call for only one match per day, should help him.

Still using his patented pinch kill shots, forehand and backhand, Ron's shooting ability is second to none. But when a player, any player, tires the first thing to go is shooting ability.

To counteract fatigue Ron tends to go all out in the first game, putting all his marbles in one bag, so to speak. If he wins, he does the same thing in the second. But if he loses either game one or two, game three is even more difficult since he has not been pacing himself.

Rubenstein will reach the top eight, and if he has been taking the tournament seriously with a conditioning program, might reach the top four. But the birthday cake will not be cut on court five at the Tropicana April 25.



HOWARD W. CANNON
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March 6, 1975

U. S. National Racquetball
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Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to welcome the U. S.
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I know you will find Las Vegas a friendly
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Good luck and best wishes to all participants
of this championship tournament.



Sincerely,

Howard W. Cannon
HOWARD W. CANNON

Mike Zeitman, 10-1
Louisville

Mike has really turned what began as a disastrous season into a rapidly improving one, finishing his last three major pro events in the top eight. With personal problems that affected his game now behind him, Mike's concentration and desire seem to have returned.

For years people have been predicting great things for Mike Zeitman in racquetball, but he never has seemed to reach his full potential. Holder of all the shots, great quickness and stamina, Zeitman at first look should seldom be beat.

His biggest problem in the past, and one likely to plague him in Las Vegas is shot selection. Having the shots is only half of the battle, knowing when to use them makes good players into national champs. This is concentration on the court, and it seems to be coming back to the 26-year-old now.

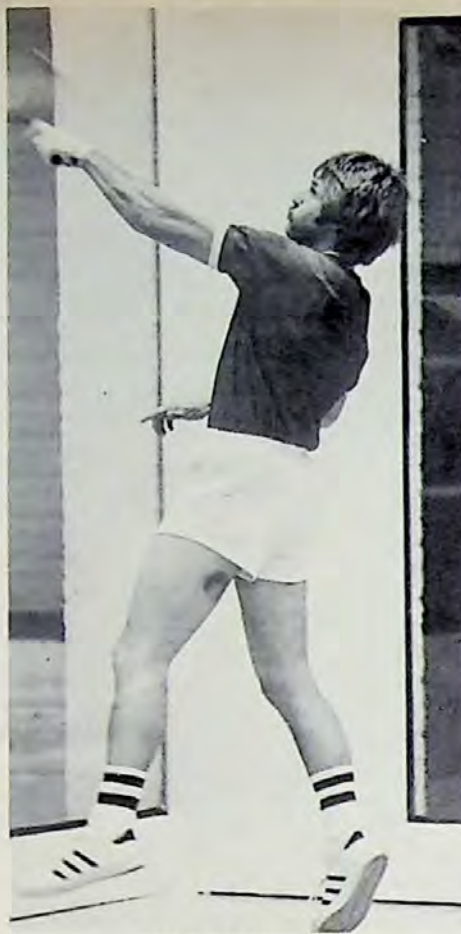
A national doubles titlist at age 20, the intervening six years have proved tough ones for Mike. A broken back three years ago almost finished his playing career, but he fought back to play very well. He seems to match up against the game's best and play better against them than against lesser players.

Can Mike win the pro singles championship? Yes. But he could also lose in the round of 32 or 16 or quarters. He's playing well now, and if he keeps his head on straight Mike could surprise a lot of people.

Craig McCoy, 20-1
Riverside, Cal.

Another left-handed youngster, 18-year-old Craig is coming into his own in the racquetball arena. A tough, three game loss to Serot recently proved to all that he can stay on the court with the game's best. But Craig has not been known to do well in the big tournaments, the inexperience and pressure taking its toll. This lack of experience or ability to handle the pressure marks McCoy as an excellent player who could go out early. Yet, he has the game and shots to reach as high as anyone.

Showing excellent form both forehand and backhand, Craig's forte is a pinpoint forehand kill, 85



RON STROM

per cent of the time in the left corner. His strokes are almost effortless and he glides around the court rather than the mad scramble by many of the other top players.

But for McCoy to do well in Las Vegas, and for him to have any chance at all to win it, somebody had better buy him a pair of blinders.

Ron Strom, 20-1
Minneapolis

The "Strummer" like the other players in the 10-1 and 20-1 category is just a shade away from serious contention. A defensive backhand makes up most of that shade, although a ferocious forehand helps to counterbalance it.

Just turned 30 (April 10) Ron is still really a pro racquetball rookie, this being his first year of serious competition. He's solid top 10, probably top eight and marginal top four.

A nicer guy can't be found and perhaps a bit more meanness on the court would help his game. If his forehand is "on" he's going to destroy anybody he meets early, and give fits to anybody from the round of 16 on.

Formerly a teacher with Stran-

demo in St. Cloud, Minnesota, Ron now manages a court club in the Minneapolis area. He's been working on that backhand, and if it ever comes around, — look out.

Jerry Hilecher, 20-1
St. Louis

It's been a lousy year for Jerry Hilecher. After a pretty good start the bottom has fallen out of his game. Beginning with a round of 16 loss to Rich Wagner in Sunnysvale, California in January, he lost again early in Dallas.

Part of Jerry's problem is lack of competition. He's a student at the University of Missouri where four inferior courts and no quality players other than himself, make keeping his game sharp next to impossible. In order to get a game he needs to drive home on weekends, which is not always practical.

A year ago Hilecher was one of the most dynamic, exciting players to watch. Known as a gambling shooter, waiting to "get hot" has been his trademark. His game recently has been to force his shots, take too many low percentage efforts and fail because of it.

For Jerry Hilecher to be a factor in Las Vegas, a complete reversal of recent form is necessary.



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Richard Wagner, 25-1
San Diego

Another tour rookie, this New Jersey 19-year-old now schools at the University of San Diego. From a dismal performance in the national juniors tourney last year, to top 10 this season shows the great strides that Wagner has taken.

He'll be there soon, but not yet. His game is marked by fantastic speed and quickness and a nice soft touch in front court. He is generally recognized as the fastest player on the tour, but we all know you have to do more than just reach the ball.

Rapid success seems to have led to a period of unsureness for Rich. He has tried too hard to analyze his own game, find out what has made him so successful and go on from there. Instead he should be concentrating on making his shots when he gets them, to play more aggressively in shot selection.

When it's third and long, Wagner has been playing safe. You can't win unless you go for it.

Bill Dunn, 25-1
Union City, Cal.

Nobody likes to play Bill Dunn. That's the way the pros speak of him, and this fact just makes Bill chuckle, "I know, they hate it." The reason is that Bill is as patient a player as you'll ever find. He is content to hit a thousand ceiling balls until the right shot comes to him. He plays percentages by the book, — you'll seldom see him take a low percentage shot.

Defense is his trade. He'll wear an opponent down, force him to take the poor shots, and pounce from there. Few players like to hit ceiling after ceiling ball, except Dunn.

Although not particularly fast on the court, Dunn is deceptive, as is his entire game. "He doesn't look like he's doing a thing out there," says one fellow player. "All he does is score points."

Bill won't score enough to win in Vegas. But top eight is not out of his grasp.

Marty Hogan, 30-1
St. Louis

This 17-year-old high schooler has not reached his racquetball



MARTY HOGAN

maturity yet, but when he does, look out! Right now he rates top 16 and he improves every day.

Although not a serious title contender this year, the future holds nothing but roses for Hogan. His main contributions will be two, — first look for him to knock off one or two seeded players ahead of him. Second, look for his tough matches to be spiced with on-the-court antics.

He'll utilize fake time outs, insult opponents, cheer himself, hassle referees and more. He's as entertaining a player as there is on the tour, but the general consensus is that his game will improve when he concentrates more on his shots and less on the crowd.

Bill Thurman, 30-1
Redwood City, Cal.

Congenial Bill is another racquetballer that the other players hate to play, mainly because you never know quite how good Bill will perform. When he's on, he can beat anybody. But when he's off he can be horrible.

To win the pro title in Las Vegas, it will take more consistency than Bill Thurman has ever shown before. But before he's through he

could make life very rough for some of the higher seeded players.

Thurman's main problem over the past few years, and remaining today is concentration. Like Mike Zeitman, his shot selection at times has bordered on the ridiculous. Unlike Zeitman, Thurman doesn't seem to be outgrowing it.

Dan Alder, 50-1
Lansing, Michigan

A real student of the game, Dan has had many a misfortune fall upon his racquetball career this season. After a fast start along the N.R.C. tour, he packed up in mid-season and moved from San Diego to Michigan. The resulting loss of competition and daily verbalizing on racquetball theory with other analysts has destroyed Dan's game.

Now playing close to 10 points below his capabilities, it will take a monumental effort for Dan to regain the form he showed earlier this season. Unless his shots stay down and his head stays up, he'll have trouble in the 16's.

Ken Wong, 50-1
St. Louis

Little Ken has not made too many of the tour stops this year as he continues work on his masters degree in computer technology. But this former intercollegiate squash champion is a real hustler and when he shows up does a good job.



BILL THURMAN



KEN WONG

But the pace of the play at the top has picked up considerably since Wong was a regular tour player and it will be most difficult for him to get back into the swing of things by April 20.

Still lacking that consistent kill shot, Wong could break into the top 16, but anything higher will be a real surprise.

Victor Niederhoffer, 100-1 New York

One of the all-time greats in the world of squash will try his hand in the pro bracket of racquetball in Las Vegas. Having virtually no experience in racquetball, it is difficult to believe that Mr. Niederhoffer, despite great skills, can make an indentation on even the top 16.

But just the fact that Niederhoffer is willing to give racquetball's best a go for it shows the class of this man. We wish him all the luck in the world, and we think he'll need it.

National Director Chairs Seeding and Draw Committee

The seeding of players and placement in the brackets is the most sensitive and important step of any tournament. And when the tournament is the National Championships as this one is here in Las Vegas, with the largest purse in the history of the game, well, it is just that much more important.

Seeding and match pairings for all N.R.C. and U.S.R.A. national tournaments are based on previous results of pro-am play from any sector. The National Seeding Committee is chaired by National Director Chuck Leve on whose shoulders all final authority with the draw rests.

Leve requests and receives aid

from many areas on a regional and local basis, wherever the Seamco Pro-Am tour travels. But no other person in the nation knows the players like Leve. He himself is not a pro player and that fact, plus his track record, have earned him the confidence and respect of all the players, who feel that with Leve in charge of the draw they will all get a fair shake.

Player number one is selected and placed at the top of the draw sheet, with player number two placed at the bottom. From there players three and four are chosen, and a coin is flipped, deciding which player goes at the bottom of the top bracket and which to the top of the bottom bracket.

Players ranked five through eight are then selected and their places in the brackets are chosen by luck of the draw. Players nine through 16 are placed in a likewise manner. The remaining slots are filled by luck of the draw.

This method of draw has two distinct benefits. First, the tournament is given balance by separating the top players on opposite sides of the tournament, thus making, theoretically for the best pairings in the quarter, semi, and final round matches. Secondly, it is fair by determining opponents by a blind draw.



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Meet The N.R.C. And U.S.R.A.

Robert W. Kendler

Bob Kendler, at age 70 still a dynamo on the court, is the father of all the court sports. Before racquetball was ever imagined, this Milwaukee born real estate giant was wowing the spectators on the handball court. And if you've been following handball or racquetball for a few years, then you know the story of court sport success that has followed Bob.

In 1951, at the urging of his fellow players, and in an attempt to right what were then and still are inconsistencies in the amateur code, Bob formed the U.S. Handball Association. At that time the Amateur Athletic Union (A.A.U.) had total jurisdiction over the sport of handball, but not for long. Within two years, virtually every player of stature had joined the U.S.H.A.

Under Kendler's leadership, the U.S.H.A. grew to a strong and healthy body, the true voice of handball. Its publication **ACE** magazine (since changed to **HANDBALL**) has become the recognized Bible of the sport.

In 1968 Kendler culminated what had been a several year study and monitoring, and formed the International Racquetball Association. As President Bob led the I.R.A. to four and one-half years of unbelievable growth, both in memberships and income. During his term of office, **RACQUETBALL** magazine was born.

Then, in April of 1973 he became disenchanted with some of the policies set down by the I.R.A.'s Board of Directors, policies which he felt were not the natural evolution of the game and that organization. He resigned as I.R.A. President and organized the professional National Racquetball Club (N.R.C.) and amateur United States Racquetball Association (U.S.R.A.) in an effort to promote racquetball on both the professional as well as amateur level.

He succeeded in organizing a four-stop pro-am tour for the 1973-74 racquetball year. This year the tour has doubled to eight stops, with Las Vegas being the classic of them all.

As President of the N.R.C. and U.S.R.A. and like all N.R.C.-U.S.R.A. personnel, Bob would like to hear your comments about racquetball. You'll see him all around the courts this week. If something's on your mind about the sport, stop and let him answer your questions.

Chuck Leve

The one man who has ridden herd on the rise of Racquetball is Chuck Leve. Signed by Bob Kendler as Executive Secretary of the I.R.A. upon his graduation from college, Chuck quickly assimilated his talents to this babe of a sport.

Racquetball and Leve became synonymous. At his

encouragement, and anxious to put to use his journalism degree, **Racquetball** magazine was okayed by Bob Kendler and in November of 1973 it came off the presses. As Executive Secretary of the I.R.A., Leve saw the membership increase 1000 per cent in three years. One could never attend a major tournament without seeing Chuck there, on the job, taking notes, photos, refereeing matches, taping interviews, and quietly seeing to it that each tournament was a total success.

When Bob Kendler left the I.R.A., Chuck was offered the directorship of both organizations and he chose to remain with Kendler and the new N.R.C. Feeling that the future of the sport was in the pro-am concept, Chuck has put all his efforts into making the N.R.C. and U.S.R.A. go.

National Racquetball magazine is his creation, and the present format of pro-am play, with a large emphasis on amateurs, is also his brainchild.

Chuck's main two responsibilities are editing **National Racquetball** magazine and organization of the Seamco Pro-Am Tour. These two, plus the daily chores of keeping the membership up to date and informed, re-writing and printing of the U.S.R.A.-N.R.C. rule book and many other details fall to Chuck.

Although author of the best selling instructional book in racquetball, Chuck's duties keep him from playing as much as he would like.

As for his playing ability, Chuck says, "I consider my entry fee a donation."

Joe Ardito

A "long" time ago Joe Ardito became involved with racquetball. This is not too unusual except that Joe was a life-long handballer. But the great experience he had gained from his years of striking the ball with his hands, and running tournaments was an obvious answer to the needs of the U.S.R.A.

To next page

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Ardito has been with the N.R.C. and now U.S.R.A. since the inception of pro-am play in the fall of 1973. A Chicago native, Joe has been instrumental in organizing the Illinois Handball Association and currently takes an active role not only with handball, but racquetball on a local level as well.

As business manager of both organizations, Joe's ability to negotiate contracts, find new sources of income and budget that income have lent a guiding hand to the promotional efforts of the N.R.C. and U.S.R.A.

As National Commissioner he has earned the respect of all the players, amateurs and pros, as a fair, but firm enforcer of U.S.R.A. policies.

Joe has taken the brunt of the burden for the Nationals here in Las Vegas. Co-ordination with the Tropicana on room arrangements, court rehabilitation, handling of entries, awards and virtually all phases of the event have passed through Joe's scrutiny. And it has been no easy task. Just a look around at the record number of entries for both the handball and racquetball weeks tell you what a job he has done.

Joe Ardito, he's our kind of guy.

Gordy Pfeifer

Although Gordy Pfeifer (pronounced Py-fer) is employed by the National Handball Club (N.H.C.), —

handball's pro group similar to racquetball's N.R.C.) his efforts to make both the handball and racquetball National Championships in Las Vegas a success cannot be minimized.

Working out of his native Tacoma, Washington, Gordy has spent many exhausting hours in Las Vegas, leaving wife and family at home for weeks at a time to make sure everything was progressing satisfactorily.

He is well known in inner circles of the organizations for his uncanny ability to stay on top of a problem until it is entirely worked out to his satisfaction. That of course, is also to the satisfaction of the N.R.C. and U.S.R.A.

Gordy has been the U.S.R.A. and U.S.H.A.'s chief negotiator and worker in Las Vegas for the past year. Many of the local people here, both laymen and employees of the Tropicana and University claim that he lives in their pockets.

Pfeifer is like a prized bloodhound. Once on the trail he believes right, he'll stay on it until the end result is accomplished. All he asks for is action, but he'll wait around to make sure it's done.

Also a top handball player, Gordy has shaken serious respiratory illness to reach the top eight of the N.H.C.'s Spalding pro tour. His all out style of play is indicative of his off the court personality. He never lets up.

N.R.C. MEN'S MONEY EARNINGS

Rank	Player	Starts	Total Earnings	Average Earnings Per Event
1 (tie)	Charles Brumfield	2	\$2,100	\$1,050
	Steve Strandemo	2	2,100	1,050
3	Steve Keeley	6	5,200	866
4	Steve Serot	6	5,100	850
5	Ron Rubenstein	3	1,200	400
6	Ron Strom	4	1,580	395
7	Dan Alder	5	1,430	286
8	Mike Zeitman	5	1,115	223
9 (tie)	Randy Stafford	1	200	200
	Ken Wong	1	200	200
11 (tie)	Richard Wagner	6	1,140	190
	Bill Schmidtke	2	380	190
13	Jim Trent	2	215	107
14	Charles Drake	6	495	82
15	Marty Hogan	4	315	78
16	Paul Ikier	3	230	76
17	Joe Ycaza	4	300	75

N.R.C. LADIES' MONEY EARNINGS

Rank	Player	Starts	Total Earnings	Average Earnings Per Event
1 (tie)	Kathy Williams	3	\$750	\$250
	Jan Campbell	1	250	250
3 (tie)	Sue Carow	3	450	150
	Siliva Hooks	1	150	150
5 (tie)	Betty Johnson	3	150	50
	Jean Sauser	1	50	50
	Bette Weed	1	50	50
	Gerri Stoffregen	1	50	50
	Camille McCarthy	1	50	50
10	Teri Davis	2	50	25

Can Anyone Catch Ms. 'Super Tex?'

Picking the winner of the women's pro bracket is an easy chore. Peggy Steding, barring injury or illness or act of God, will win the title.

The real difficulty in picking the gals is that the rest of the field is an unknown quantity. Many of the gals behind Peggy have the game and desire to make a true run for, if not the title, certainly the runner-up position.

So, who else, besides Steding will be playing well during Las Vegas? Will another unknown, like herself in 1973, vault to the top in meteoric fashion?

At this date the development of women's racquetball is not alluring enough for all the top players to congregate once a month to battle each other; to gain the needed experience and throw off the hindering straitjacket of inconsistency.

The Seamco Pro Tour drew a Carow-Williams final in three of the past four months. The one time they didn't reach the finals was be-

cause neither of them competed. In that one it was Campbell first and Hooks second.

For this reason, after the proven players, i.e., Steding, Campbell, Pasternak and Williams, anything can happen. And even the last three on the above list are not immune from early round upsets.

Women's racquetball needs more time, more prize money, and more tournaments to encourage the dedication and play that marks the men's bracket. The Seamco Pro Tour offers \$500 per tournament to be divided between the top four ladies. And although it is not much, it is the first cohesive attempt to give them something. As the game moves forward, the prizes and events will move upward. Until then, I see it this way.

*Peggy Steding, 1-1
Odessa, Tex.*

It's even money that Peggy Steding will capture the women's pro title, if she plays. And although we expect her to go after the first pro Ladies Championships, it would mark her first appearance on the tour this season if she does.

Although not quite as invincible as in recent years, Peggy still is tough enough to win the tournament. Two years ago, she was head and shoulders above the rest of the field. Now she has been having to go three games with players like Jan Campbell, Jan Pasternak, and Jenny Harding.

To our knowledge Peggy still has never lost a racquetball match to another woman. She has had to go three games a few times, but has always managed to win.

Her powerful game, with devastating forehand drives and kills, enables her to utterly destroy opponents. Her backhand is good,



PEGGY STEDING

she's able to hit a strong ceiling ball either way, and has the quickness and anticipation to get to most shots.

But age could be catching up on the 38-year-old champ, dubbed "Super Tex" by admirers and foes alike. The road could be a long one in Vegas, and since Peggy insists on playing many tournaments during the year, her conditioning must be tops for her to last the rigors of the Nationals.

Will she last? Yes. Will she win the title? Yes. Will it be easy? No.

*Jan Campbell, 4-1
San Diego*

"Scramble" Campbell has been waiting for her shot at the title for three years now, ever since Steding showed up unexpectedly in 1973 to eliminate a shocked Jan in the second round. Of the rest of the field, Campbell is the best, although she is still plagued by her old nemesis, inconsistency.

Campbell has matured on the court in the past few years, and much of the reason can be paralleled to the emergence of Steding. From a cocky San Diegan on the verge of dominating the women's scene, Jan was suddenly humbled by this unknown wonder woman. And it did her good.

She has worked extremely hard on her game since then, and has come to within two points of taking that first match off Steding. Although she sometimes has trouble with lesser players, she is the one woman who can give that great effort necessary to topple Steding.

Jan's close relationship with men's star Charlie Brumfield has certainly helped her game, too. Charlie's steady influence and



JAN CAMPBELL

instruction has aided Jan's development a great deal.

But she is no one's shadow. Her great determination, and flawless form will soon be the best female game in the land. She has both the backhand and forehand, the ceiling and passes, and the kill ability. She is quickly learning strategy and conditioning, her knee, injured last year, is sound.

I don't think she can win it this year. But she might come real close.

**Jan Pasternak, 6-1
Tempe, Ariz.**

Two-time national amateur champ Jan Pasternak rates as another outside chance at the title. Pasternak can and has defeated Campbell, but can't and never has defeated Steding. Most likely, she'll have to beat Campbell before she gets a shot at Steding.

For Jan to do well in Las Vegas a lot depends on her physical condition. She has a tendency to put on weight, one of the major problems facing this 21-year-old gal. If she's in shape, nobody can compare with her determination and desire on the court. But if she's out of shape, she'll catch hers quick, for this year's field of females is the strongest in history.

Jan's game is a solid combination of passes, kills, and retrieving. She doesn't tend to get into extended ceiling rallies, yet she has that capability. She'd just as soon drive the ball on you than shoot it, but she can do both. And never count her out of a point, she'll go after everything even if it means diving to the floor for that get.

But it's just this style that causes her to wilt under the exhausting effort, when she's not in playing condition. One look at Jan as she arrives in Las Vegas will tell most players how well she'll do. If she's slim, look out!

**Kathy Williams, 8-1
Livonia, Mich.**

The only reason Kathy Williams is not rated a better shot at the women's title is competition. She just doesn't get the opportunity to play the gals above her enough to improve her game substantially. But such an excuse cannot hold up too long, for there are plenty of men around to give Kathy all she wants on the court.



JAN PASTERNAK

In tournaments, only Sue Carow has been any competition for her in the past eight months, and Kathy has yet to get psyched up for a match against Carow, probably feeling she can defeat Sue whenever she wants. And when Williams is not mentally ready to play, she doesn't play.

Yet she's as strong as any woman in the game. She has power, finesse, can hit great ceiling shots, drives, and kills. Her form is exquisite, and she knows the game. The only thing Kathy



KATHY WILLIAMS

lacks is consistency.

At times she appears to be the greatest player in the world. At other times she doesn't move, has horrible shot selection, and can't execute. It's motivation that Kathy Williams needs, the desire to win and the concentration necessary to achieve that goal.

Will the real Kathy Williams please stand up?

**Jennifer Harding, 8-1
Portland**

It's really impossible to predict how a player will do when one has never seen her play. This is the case with Jennifer Harding, whose game I have never witnessed, or at least if I did I wasn't sufficiently impressed to remember it.

Jenny Harding, has however, put together a string of impressive wins this season and does rate consideration to be a factor in this tournament. She was a quarter-finalist in last year's amateur nationals, losing to Pasternak 14 and 17, and she has done well in various other tournaments.

My sources tell me she's the most improved female player in the land and if that's the case, she must be playing very well. The only question I have is whether or not she can hold up under the pressure of the Las Vegas event.

If she can, she's sure to reach the quarters, maybe the semi's, but I can't see her taking a serious run at Steding. But then, I never have seen her, so who am I to say?

**Sue Carow, 12-1
Glenview, Ill.**

Susie Carow is going to be mad at me, but I still can't rate her any better than 12-1. If desire and guts and determination were all that counted, she'd win the whole thing hands down. But trying hard doesn't always put the ball away and Sue's game, although one of the top eight in the country, is not good enough to vault her to the best in the land.

Sue claims you don't need a good ceiling game to win the women's title. I disagree. You might not need the ceiling in local, state, or even regional match-ups against other gals, but against the top four or five you certainly do.

Carow's drives and lobs serve almost the same purpose, and for passing points there are none bet-



SUE CAROW

ter. But they are not enough. Although her killing ability has improved over the past year, I don't see Carow doing much better than last year's quarter-final finish.

If she does better, I'll be the first to congratulate her.

**Jean Sauser, 12-1
Northbrook, Ill.**

Jeannie Sauser, Carow's good friend and near-equal on the court rates about the same as Sue. Although I'd pick Carow in a match between the two, chances are they'll be in opposite brackets here in Las Vegas.

Sauser is another top eighter from last year's amateur nationals, where she was blown out by Williams 21-4, 21-7. Jean's game has improved greatly since then and in a matchup with Williams would now do much better.

Jean has good strength, a great forehand kill, but inconsistency with her backhand. She also tends to lose concentration on the court, making her look lazy at times, which she is not.

All Jean needs is the incentive to work harder at her game, take it more seriously. More hours on the court would help, especially to gain the needed consistency.

But then, anybody can criticize from afar. Sauser is good, but no better than top eight.

**Betty Johnson, 15-1
San Diego**

Betty Johnson has shown great improvement over the past year, and if she continues to work on her game, has a real good chance to break into the top eight.

The accessibility of top competition in San Diego is one aid to her game and her ability to think on the court is probably her greatest asset during play.

Recent months have shown her definite ability to kill the ball, and Betty does not seem to know what pressure is yet. Her emotionless conduct on the court does not indicate the true inward feelings of this highly competitive female. But it does allow her play well at all points during a match.

Betty still does not have quite the shots to make a real run at the title. Still, watch for her to pull an upset or two during the week.

**Camille McCarthy, 25-1
Indianapolis**

McCarthy, like Johnson is a pretty blond whose lack of outward emotion on the court can drive opponents wild. Camille however, does not quite have the game that Betty, or the other girls above her do.

Not that she isn't a good player, she is. But she lacks the strength and durability that mark the top gals, along with a powerful backhand, so important in women's racquetball.

Camille will be a delight to watch, as usual. But she will go no higher than the quarter-finals.

**Gerri Stoffregen, 25-1
Cincinnati**

If Gerri can put together two consecutive games like her first game against Kathy Williams in the Michigan Pro-Am, she will do very well in Las Vegas. But Gerri, like so many of the better women racquetball players of today, lacks the consistency that would vault her many notches up the ladder.

It will be a great feat for her, or any woman out of the top eight seeds to put together three or four excellent rounds. But I don't think it will happen. Gerri, like many of the others, lacks the big tournament experience, the experience of playing other top females on a regular basis.

She'll be top 16, — but no higher.

**Silvia Hooks, 25-1
San Francisco**

Silvia is a newcomer to top ladies racquetball, having placed second in the Sunnyvale-Frampton pro-am in January. Her strength and speed account for many of her points, but alas, the same haunting problems appear in her games as with the others.

First, tournament experience. Except for the top five or six girls, none has had the constant pressure and exposure of tournament play, especially Silvia. Second, she is still inconsistent, and the experience she steadily will gain will aid that fault. Third, her backhand is not quite ready for top notch competition.

But Silvia is improving, and I hope she plays in Las Vegas. She can use the work, and she could surprise a few on the way.

**Bette Weed, 25-1
San Diego**

Bette could be much better than a 25-1 shot for the title, but probably won't. Her national tournament credentials are not nearly as good as her local and invitational results, a problem Bette has had for a few years now, and just can't seem to shake.

It's unfortunate, because Bette is a fine racquetball player. She is strong, has all of the shots, but doesn't seem able to keep her head together during the nationals.

If she can handle the pressure in Las Vegas, cut her odds in half.



BETTE WEED

We'd Like You To Know More About Our Organizations

The two racquetball associations headquartered at 4101 Dempster Street in Skokie, Illinois and the people who lead these organizations have been in the court sports business for many years.

The National Racquetball Club, (N.R.C.) our professional racquetball outlet, was organized in 1973 and was the first organization to deliver professional racquetball to the public.

The United States Racquetball Association (U.S.R.A.) was formed in 1974 and is responsible for *National Racquetball* magazine and is hosting these wonderful National Championships here in Las Vegas.

But the racquetball histories of these two organizations goes back much farther than that. Robert W. Kendler, president of both organizations, is a long time handball player, dating back to the 1930's (but don't tell him you read it here). In 1951 he and a group of handball's top players felt the Amateur Athletic Union (A.A.U.) was not truly representing the country's handball players and led by Kendler the group formed the United States Handball Association (U.S.H.A.).

The great successes of the U.S.H.A. are well annalled and those of you who witness the handball nationals April 13-18 will know that this game is far from losing popularity, — in fact handball continues to grow.

In 1968 Kendler brought together a number of dissident factions of racquetball, paddleball, paddle racquets and other groups into a cohesive unit under the national banner of the International Racquetball Association (I.R.A.).

Under Kendler's leadership the I.R.A. grew from nothing to a thriving organization with annual income over \$125,000 by the year 1973. It was in that year, however, that political in-fighting disrupted the organization and due to his

disagreements with some members of the board of directors on policy and directions to take, Kendler resigned the presidency and formed the N.R.C.

One of the reasons for resigning was Kendler's belief that professionalism would be a great boost to racquetball and he had spoke a desire to begin a small pro tour within the I.R.A. But he saved this plum for his newly-created N.R.C. and thus the first pro tour was begun in September, 1973.

For a year the N.R.C. went about its business of promoting the sport through pro and pro-am competition. It was not an easy road to hoe, though, as one might imagine. But the initial pains of birth are long behind the N.R.C. which had four tournaments in the 1973-74 season and has had eight in this the 1974-75 season. This pro-am nationals is the culmination of the greatest year in racquetball's history.

In the fall of 1974, when political pressures were mounting, Kendler and the N.R.C. felt that many decisions being made by the I.R.A. were not in the best interests of all racquetballers, especially amateurs, the 99.44 per cent of those playing the game. For that reason, feeling that true amateurism still had a place and an important one at that in the total racquetball spectrum, Kendler formed the U.S.R.A.

These National Championships is the U.S.R.A.'s first major effort, and we are proud indeed of the job done by our many representatives. Later this year state and local chapters will be organized, and state, regional and invitational tournaments will be set up to give the amateurs a chance to compete for the pure joy and stimulation of the game. They will not have to buck those people who have decided to make their living playing the game.

National Racquetball magazine serves both organizations as official voice of the U.S.R.A. and

N.R.C. It contains tournament results, instructional articles, information on development and opening of court clubs, tournament schedules and interviews with the game's stars. It is a bi-monthly publication and we feel the best periodical on racquetball in the country.

There have never been and will never be any qualifications, restrictions, bans, or discrimination in any N.R.C. or U.S.R.A. event. It is our feeling that if you, Mr. Racquetball, wishes to participate in one of our tournaments, all you have to do is enter, — that's all.

If you're an amateur and want to compete against the pros, — fine be our guest. If you want to play amateur in the U.S.R.A. and haven't accepted more than \$200 prize money in the past 12 calendar months, be our guest. We'd love to have you, — anywhere.

The N.R.C. has endorsed the Seamco 559 green racquetball in 1974, the official ball of the pro tour. Since then Seamco has been the driving force behind the N.R.C. ans had donated \$25,000 in sponsorship money for the 1975 portion of this season's tour.

The U.S.R.A. recently endorsed the new Seamco 747 black racquetball and feel that this ball will be the rave of the racquetball world. But no matter which ball you use, you can rest assured that the royalty money that Seamco pays for our endorsements goes right back into the promotion of the sport. We'd like to thank Seamco for their generosity, and we'd like you to thank them too, by supporting us through the purchase of their products.

If any of you would like to have further information on the N.R.C., U.S.R.A., organization of local or state chapters, see one of our representatives during your stay here in Las Vegas, or contact us in Skokie. We look forward to your comments, criticisms and help.

How Fast Can A Great Athlete Learn To Play Top Racquetball?

Victor Niederhoffer, the famed squash champion, aims to find out and he'll test himself here in Las Vegas. Also in the offing is a hands versus racquet match with Niederhoffer challenging any two handball players against himself, using a handball and Niederhoffer a racquetball racquet.

By Howie Eisenberg

EDITOR'S NOTE: Howie Eisenberg, Vic's uncle, has been a six time USPBA paddleball champion, a 3-time National AA Handball doubles champion as well as frequent runner-up in USHA 1 wall and 3 wall competition and a highly ranked 4-wall doubles player.

As a frequent competitor, sometimes partner and constant observer of Vic Niederhoffer's activities on and off the court, as well as from the dual vantage point of former handball and paddleball champion, I am able to provide a rather unique perspective in presenting Vic.

A precocious youth, he wasted little time in establishing his prowess in court sports, winning a junior tournament in handball and the New York City Junior Tennis Championship at age 13. This latter accomplishment was all the more singular considering that Vic's primary competition came from bigger, stronger 17 year olds.

Even more portentous of Vic's flair, now reflected in his brash challenge, was a paddleball match game he played at age 11, against George Baskin, a man still believed by many one-wall handball devotees to have been the hardest hitting national champion ever. **(EDITOR'S NOTE: There are no small number of handball analysts who believe that that distinction belongs to Howie Eisenberg.)**

The spectacle of this scrawny kid, less than 5 feet tall (yes, even smaller than handball's Lou Russo), playing a fully mature handball champion would have indeed been ludicrous were it not for the outcome. Not only did Niederhoffer win the match, which incidentally was for a rather large sum of money, but the mastery he exhibited in repeatedly gaining court position over the veteran, Baskin, was no less than embarrassing.

Vic went on to win the New York City Junior Tennis Championship five successive times and was undefeated in interscholastic competition throughout his high school career.

While Vic was occupied with tennis, I took over the paddleball



NIEDERHOFFER

laurels for the family, winning the first four USPBA singles titles. For me, paddleball was an occasional diversion from handball, and although I easily eclipsed all competition, the victories were not all that significant to me, because I knew that my "little" nephew (6' 2" by then) was indeed superior to me in the game he had temporarily abandoned.

Vic came back to paddleball with a vengeance, divesting me of my singles crown but further enhancing the family monopoly by annexing the doubles title with me. We repeated the script the following year and then forever abdicated from the paddleball scene.

With my attentions focused on handball, Vic had found a new all-consuming sports interest in squash. Never having seen a squash court before attending Harvard, Vic's rise to the top of the squash world was meteoric. National Junior Champion his first year of play; National Intercollegiate Champion his second; runner-up in the USSRA Championship the next year; and National Champion in 1966, after less than five years of play.

This enviable record notwithstanding, Niederhoffer retired as Champion to concentrate on attaining his doctorate and to pursue his business interests. After establishing his firm, Niederhoffer, Cross & Zeckhauser as the leading business brokerage firm (ar-

rangement of mergers), Vic returned to national squash competition in 1972.

Thoroughly dominating the world of amateur squash by winning the national singles and doubles crowns in 1972, 1973, and 1974, Vic set his sights in 1975 on the diadem of the professional squash championship, the North American Open.

To attain this goal, Niederhoffer not only had to conquer the traditional handicap of the amateur competing against the professional, i.e., lack of the time and competition available to the pro, but Vic had to dispossess a dynasty. Although there is not a Ghengis among them, the Khan family of Pakistan has so completely dominated open squash for the last 25 years that the Obert clan's stranglehold on one-wall handball in the late 50's and early 60's paled by comparison.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: There were a number of tournaments where in order to win, one had to take the measure of all 3 Oberts; e.g., Steve Sandler defeated Ruby, Oscar and Carl in that order to win the 1961 AAU singles.)

At the top of the family tree was Sharif Khan, North American Champion 6 successive years and said by many to be the best squash player of all time (and younger than Niederhoffer to boot). Undaunted by the formidable obstacles in his path, Vic trained for the tournament in his own inimitable fashion. He did wind sprints on Madison Avenue on his way to and from his 7-day-a-week occupation; practiced primarily against himself (since other area players afford him little competition) and culminated his efforts with a carbohydrate starvation/saturation diet that was gleaned from the lips of an aboriginal man on his deathbed in the tropical jungle of the Australian Northern Territories.

It was at this juncture that Vic confidentially remarked to me that he would be extremely disappointed if he did not go through the tournament without losing a game. Much to everyone's astonishment, he almost did just that. Niederhoffer advanced to the finals of the North American Open in Mexico City, dispatching several lesser Khans, albeit former champions,

enroute and proceeded to take a 2-0 game lead against Sharif before losing his first game. Vic then reversed that loss in a game he describes as the best Sharif ever played. Vic won 15-11, to become the undisputed king of squash.

As an anti-climax, in successive weeks Vic won the Canadian and U.S. Nationals without a game loss. He had gotten so razor sharp and so dominated play that the matches held little excitement, despite the superb exhibitions of court mastery and shotmaking.

At 31, with no more squash worlds to conquer, Vic Niederhoffer is turning to racquetball. He has never played the game before nor has he seen it played. With characteristic confidence he is predicting victory and with two months of practice he just may succeed.

But now Niederhoffer may have gone too far. He has challenged Paul Haber and Russo in hands versus racquet two on one. Vic will use a racquetball racquet and the match will be played with a handball.

It is my firm conviction that in his challenge to Haber-Russo, Niederhoffer has for once overstepped even his capabilities. The combination of abilities represented in these two champions will prove Vic's undoing.

Included in his disadvantages are the following:

1. Court size is different from that of a squash court.
2. The bounce of a handball is completely different from that of a squash or racquetball.
3. Items 1 & 2 result in completely different spins and carom angles.
4. The kill shot which doesn't exist in squash is an integral part of the game.
5. Ditto the ceiling shot, of which Haber is the foremost exponent the game has known.
6. Movements in a handball court are necessarily different from those in a squash court.
7. Position disadvantage of players, 2 men.
8. Stamina disadvantage of players, 2 men.
9. Ability of 2 men to cover the court.
10. Because of 9, shots have to be more accurate inducing a tendency to try to make shots too fine

and commit errors.

11. Many shots will be hit too hard by the racquet and be set-ups off the back wall.

12. The natural instinct and court strategy that comes from years of handball play.

13. The inability of a racquet to hit shots that skim the wall as well as a hand can.

14. The inability of the racquet to apply the spins that a hand does in hooks.

15. Niederhoffer's lack of experience in "reading" hooks.

16. The lack of familiarity with the carom actions of a handball after a hook.

17. The match has been played by Haber alone against a stop racquetball player, with Paul acquitting himself well, splitting with Bud Muehleisen.

18. Inclusion of a great doubles player and court coverer like Russo along with Paul should prove an insurmountable obstacle.

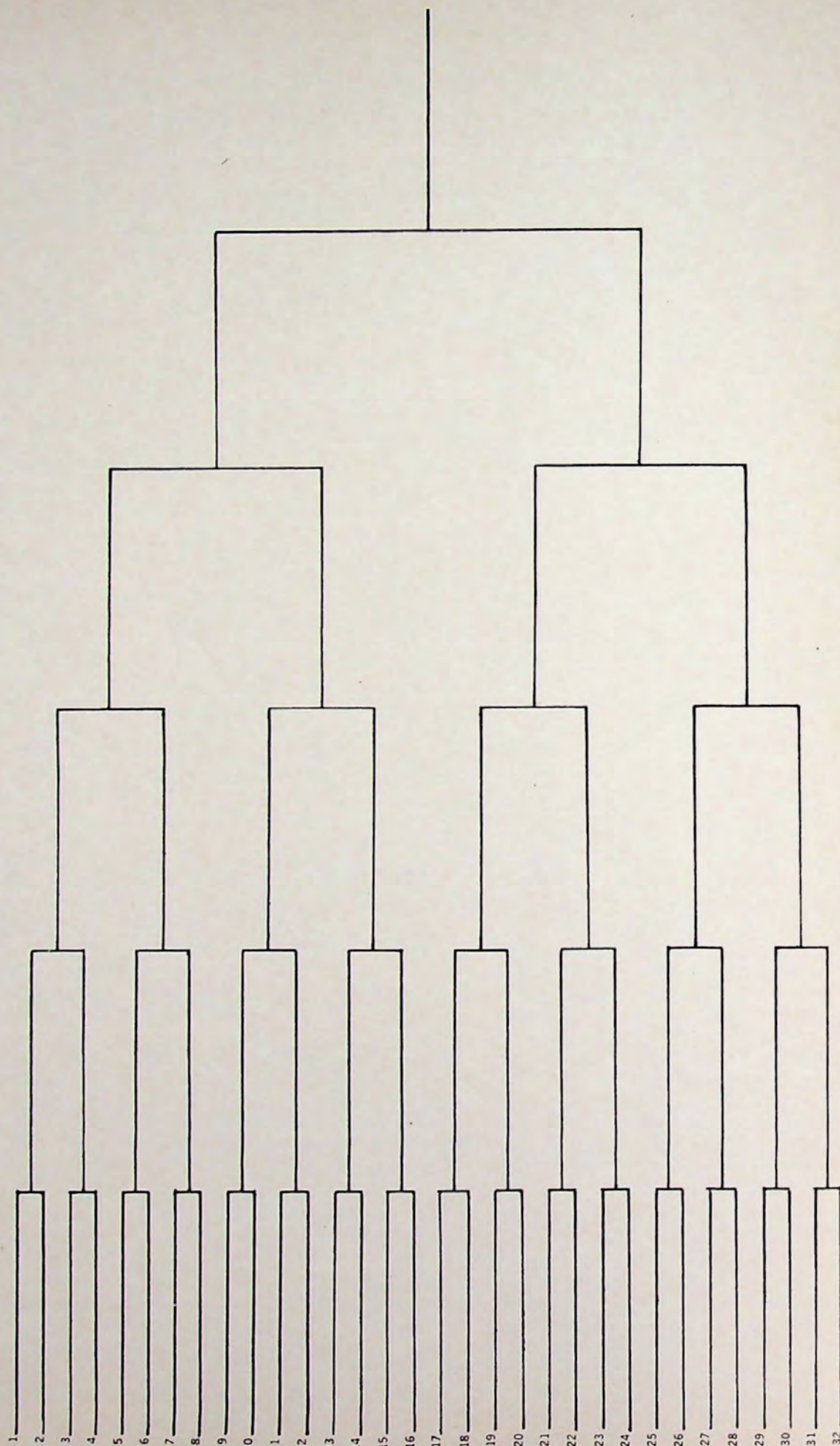
Vic is assuming that all of the above disadvantages will be counterbalanced by his great racquet skills and by the one tremendous advantage that a racquet has. There is no doubt that he will hit the ball harder than either of the two handball players. In many cases that will indeed be an advantage. In some (item 11), hitting the ball that hard will be his disadvantage.

The Niederhoffer mystique and the aura of supreme confidence he exudes have convinced a disproportionately large number of squash followers who are reputed to be willing to risk large sums of money on the event. Perhaps the rarified atmosphere of the rather restricted traditionally "upper class" game of squash racquets has stultified their thought processes to the extent of beclouding their objectivity. I believe my exposure to the relevant judgmental parameters provides me with a distinct advantage in rendering any opinion on the outcome. Although it should be an exciting match, it would seem that Vic is in over his head.

As much as I respect and appreciate his talents and despite the bias of a doting uncle, I must acknowledge that he can't walk on water — even with practice.

P.S. No ice-making machines allowed, Vic.

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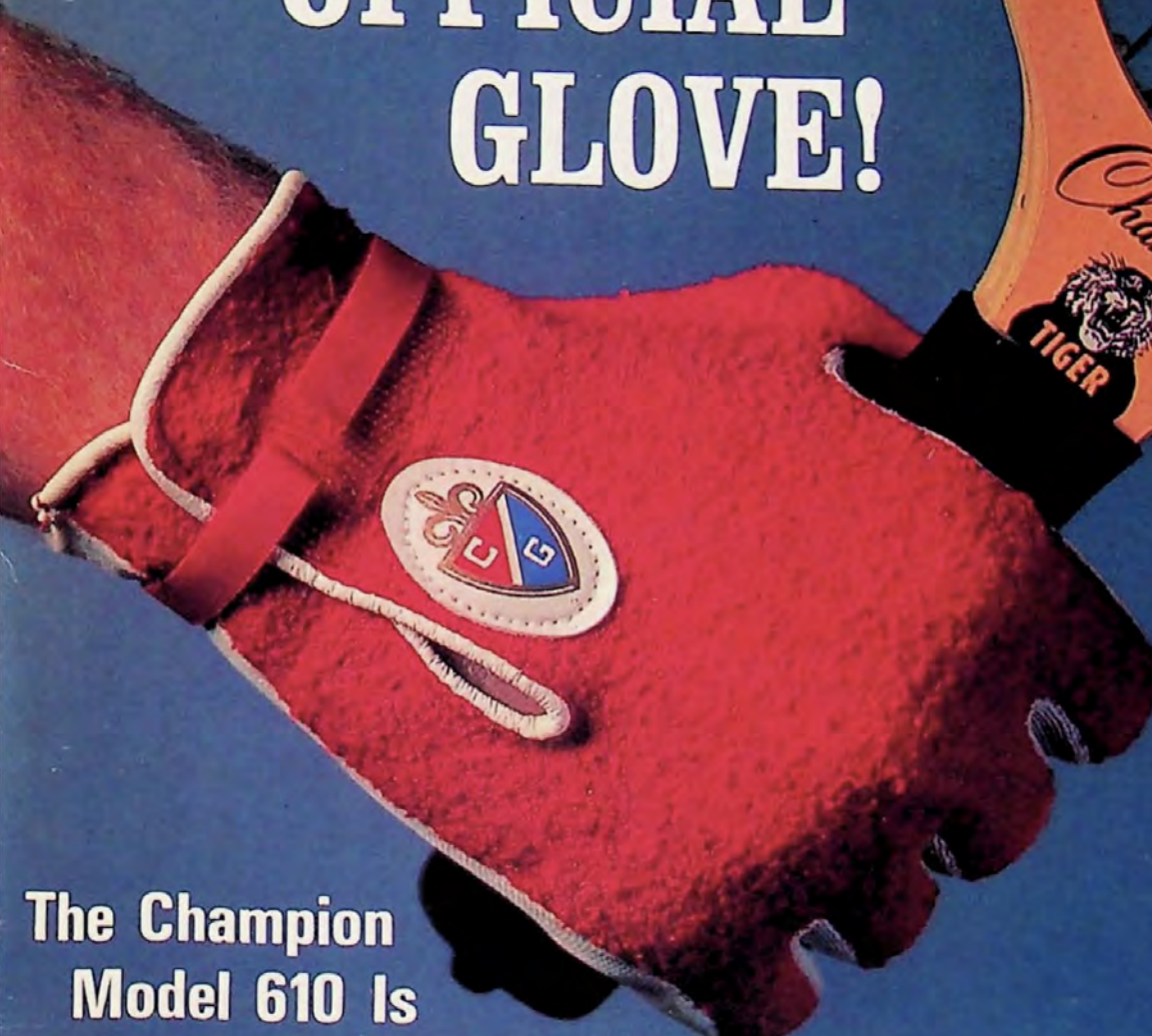
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With big business fighting for its life today, one would hardly expect a corporation to make a voluntary contribution of \$25,000 to bolster an infant sport. But that's precisely what Seamco did for the racquetball pros. It was a superb gesture and came at a critical time.

Let's look back a moment. When I organized racquetball I said it would take professional promotion to give the sport instant recognition and widespread acceptance. Playing for fun was not enough. There were too many exciting sports competing for the entertainment dollar. Racquetball was just as exciting but not as well known.

It didn't take long to build up the racquetball heroes we know today, - greats like Serot, Keeley, Brumfield, Strandemo and Schmidtke. Their performances hit the headlines everywhere. But the shows were costly and it soon became evident that until big galleries come along, the big money for the big shows would be out of the question. Membership fees and royalties were inadequate to meet the mounting cost of the amateur and pro tournaments. All of us suffered. Players lost, promoters lost, and the public stood to lose a sport that has captured the family fancy like no other sport.

That's when another hero came along. Not a player hero, - a sponsor hero. His name is Don Strong. He is Executive Vice President of Seamco, one of the world's great ball builders. Didn't take him long to see that our problem was no different than tennis or golf. It costs money to have big names. It takes a big sponsor with a big heart. Don said simply, "Bob, how can I help?" To finish our tour schedule I explained that we wanted \$25,000 in prize money. Not one cent for promotion, - 25 big ones just for the players.

"You got it Bob!" That was all. No struggle, - just a quick approval. I shouldn't have to tell you more about the strong man from Seamco. He proved he is working for the players and I hope the players will work for him. Don has never stopped trying to better the ball. The green 559 is the only ball that has ever been used in our professional tours and its superiority is unquestioned. Now comes a companion ball . . . the new black 747. It is virtually indestructible and stays live far longer than any other ball of its color. It is pressure packed for freshness and sells generally for less than other balls. New manufacturing techniques will make this the most talked of ball on the court and you should try it without fail.

Don't try it because you pay less and play more, - or because it comes with a money back guarantee. Try it because Seamco is the only manufacturer who has ever given enough pros enough money to show enough good racquetball to set the game on fire. Their support will prove to be the ingredient that boosted racquetball to its great future.

Seamco deserves the thanks and patronage of every thinking player. When you realize that it is no longer possible to put on tours without substantial outside help, - then you know how much Seamco means to all of us. Show that you are thankful by ordering the Seamco green 559 or the Seamco 747 . . . none other. Remember, a thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all other virtues.

Bless you, Don.

Bob Kender

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